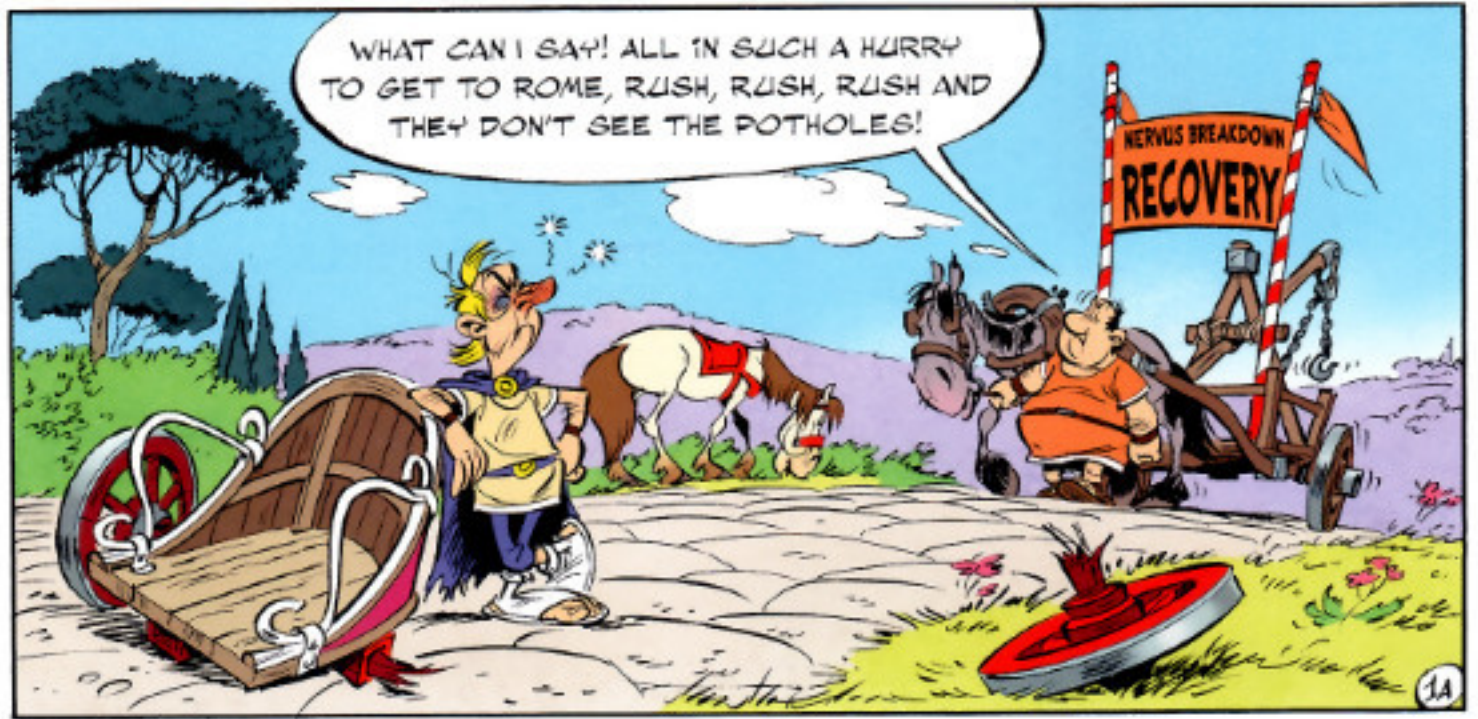


# ITALY ...

WHAT BETTER SYMBOL OF ITS DAZZLING CIVILISATION THAN ITS WONDERFUL ROADS. THEY ARRIVE, STRAIGHT AND RELIABLE, FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE KNOWN WORLD, AND THEY ALL LEAD TO ROME ...



IN ROME, SOME TIME LATER ...

POTHOLES, PRECISELY! WHICH IS WHY

**I HAVE A DREAM!**



I HAVE A DREAM THAT PUBLIC FUNDS SHALL GO TOWARDS MAINTAINING OUR ROMAN ROADS AND NOT INTO FUNDING SENATOR LACTUS BIFIDUS'S ORGIES.





THERE'S MOUNTING ANGER IN THE  
REGIONS ABOUT THE DEPLORABLE STATE  
OF OUR ROMAN ROADS!



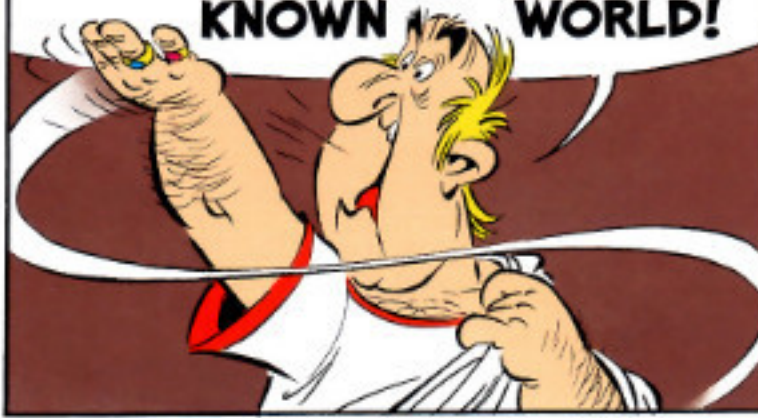
**L-LIES! I, LACTUS BIFIDUS, HAVE RESPONSIBILITY  
FOR ROMAN ROADS, AND I CANNOT  
ACCEPT THESE ALLEGATIONS!**



**SO I'D LIKE TO TAKE  
THIS OPPORTUNITY TO  
ANNOUNCE A SPECIAL  
ONE-OFF CHARIOT RACE!**



**THIS RACE WILL CROSS THE  
ENTIRE ITALIC PENINSULA  
AND WILL BE OPEN TO ALL  
THE PEOPLES OF THE  
KNOWN WORLD!**



**IT WILL BE A SPLENDID  
SHOWCASE FOR THE  
EXCELLENT STATE OF OUR  
ROMAN ROADS!**



THIS RACE IS A STROKE OF GENIUS!  
THERMOCUMULUS ALMOST HAD STEAM  
COMING OUT OF HIS EARS! DID IT  
COME TO YOU JUST LIKE THAT?

JUST LIKE THAT...  
I'M FULL OF IDEAS  
WHEN I FIRST  
WAKE UP!



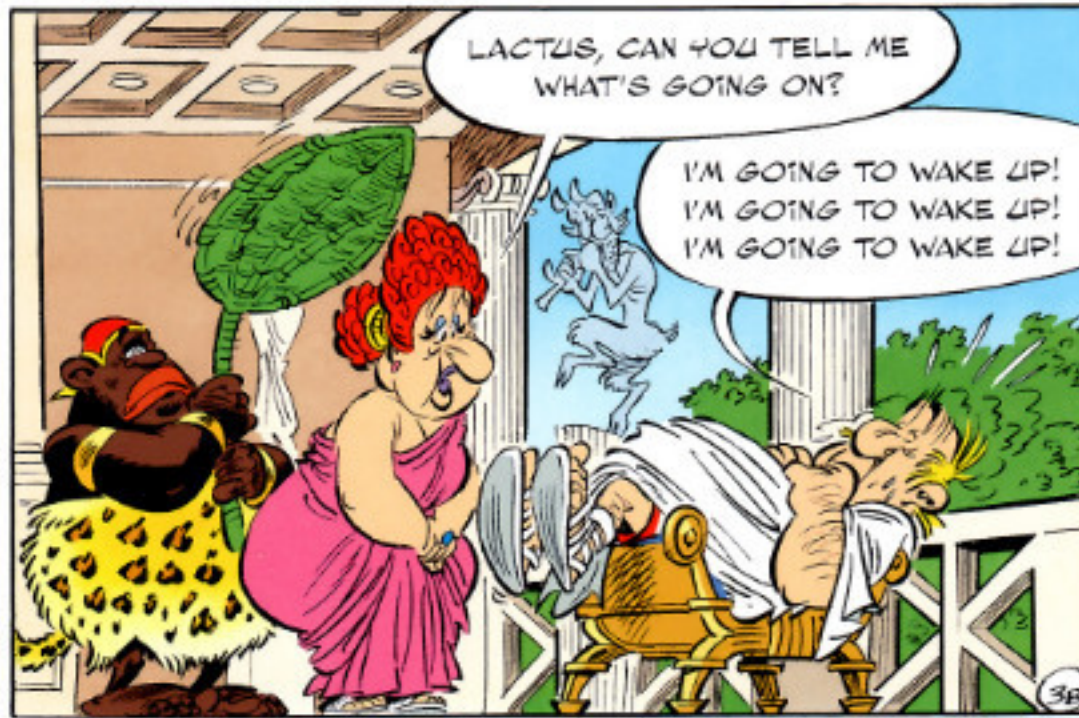
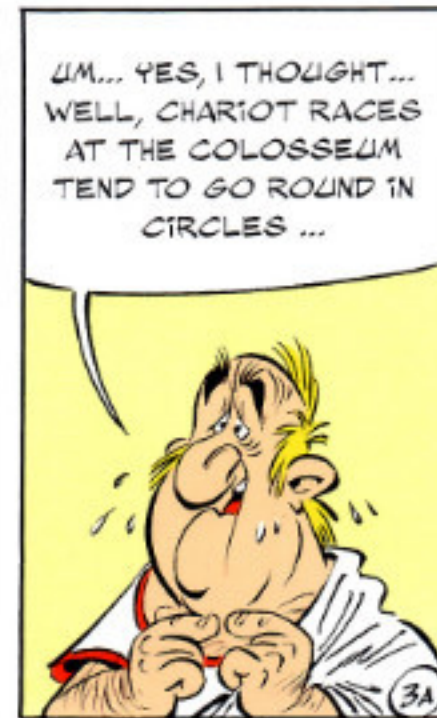
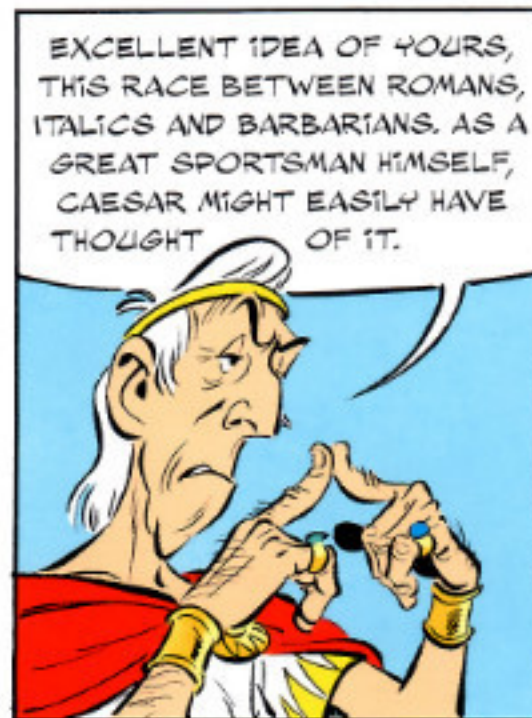
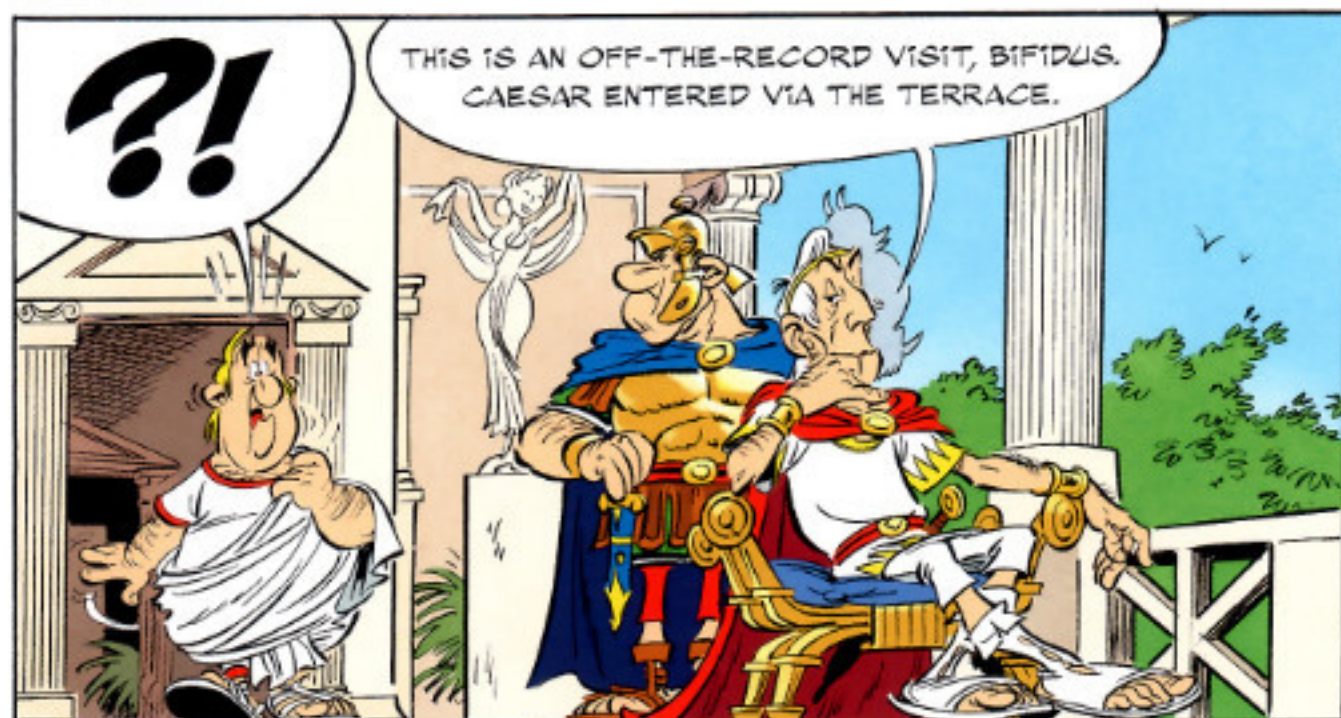
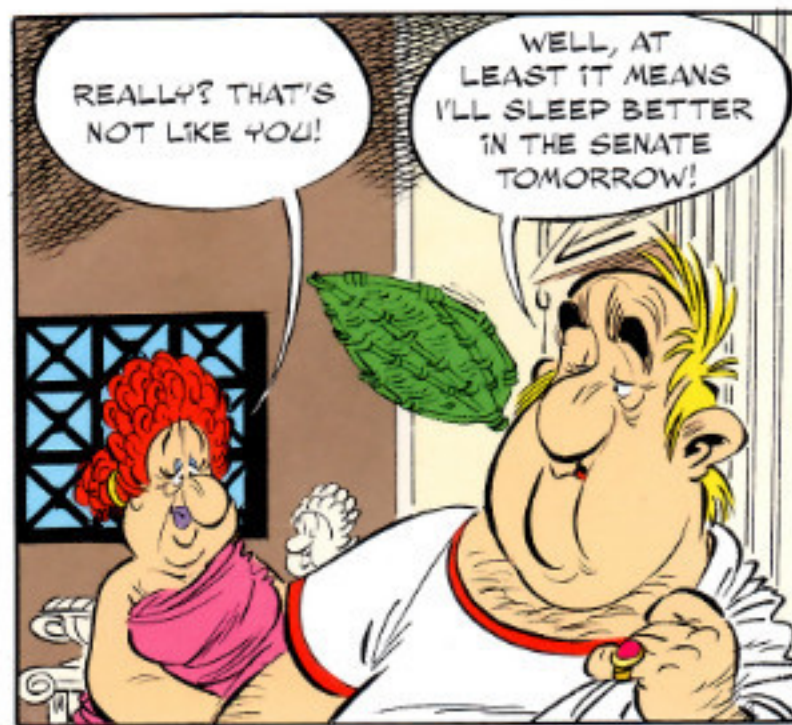
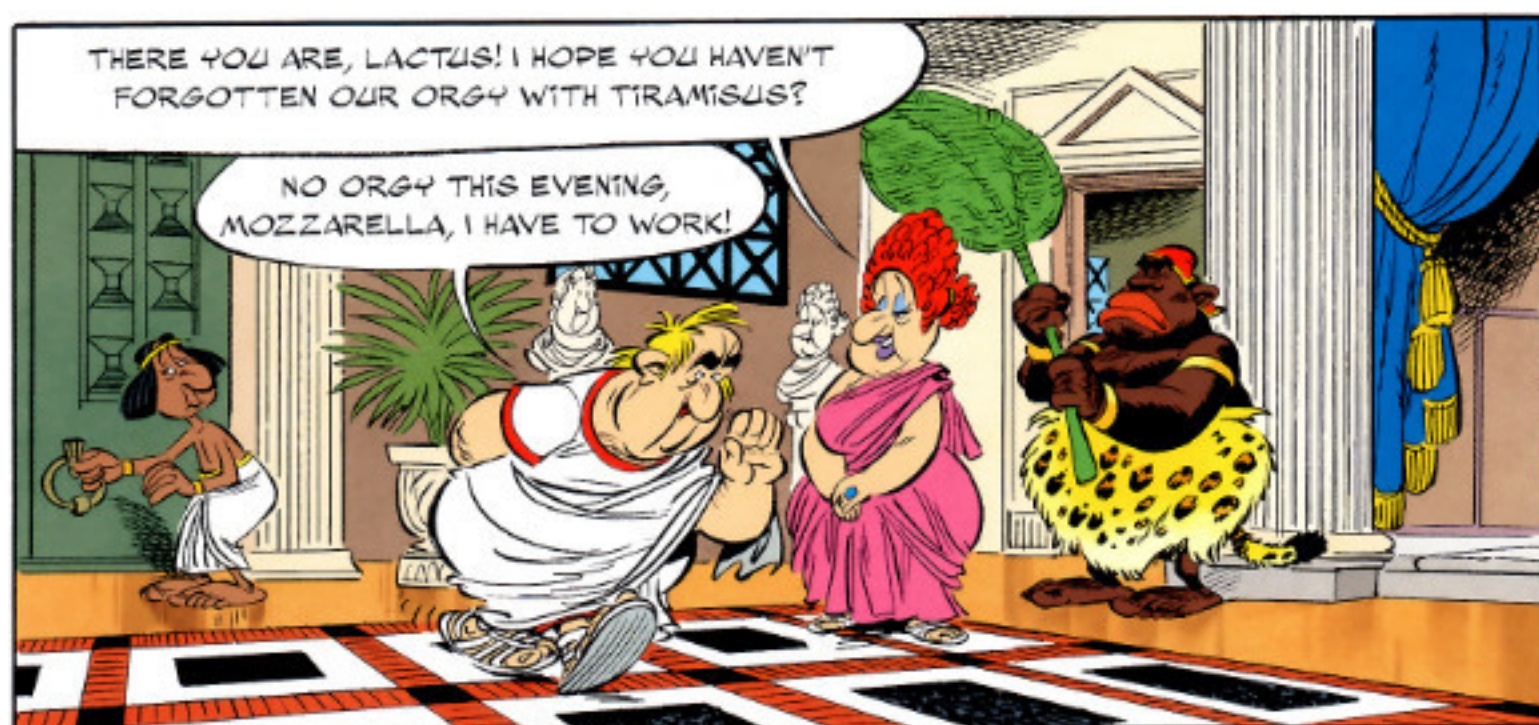
THE ONLY PROBLEM IS WE  
NOW HAVE A RACE TO  
ORGANISE AND THE ROAD  
NETWORK'S A NIGHTMARE ...



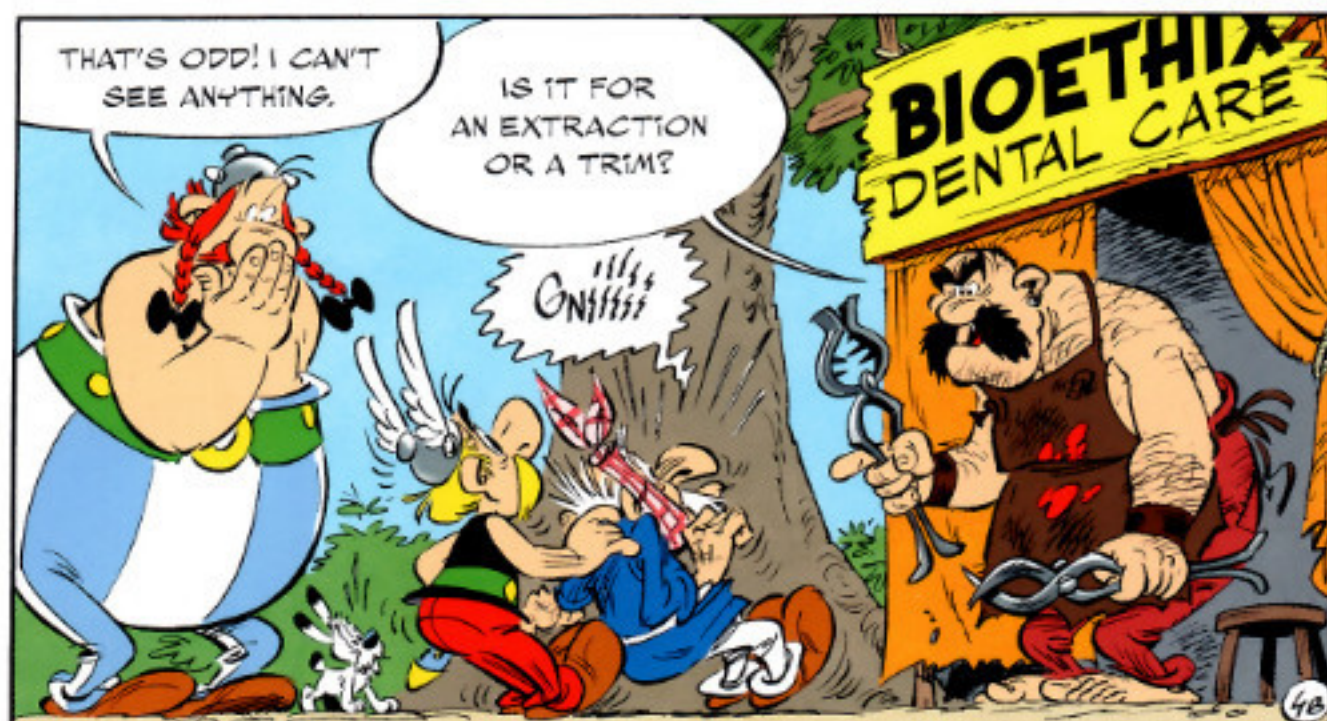
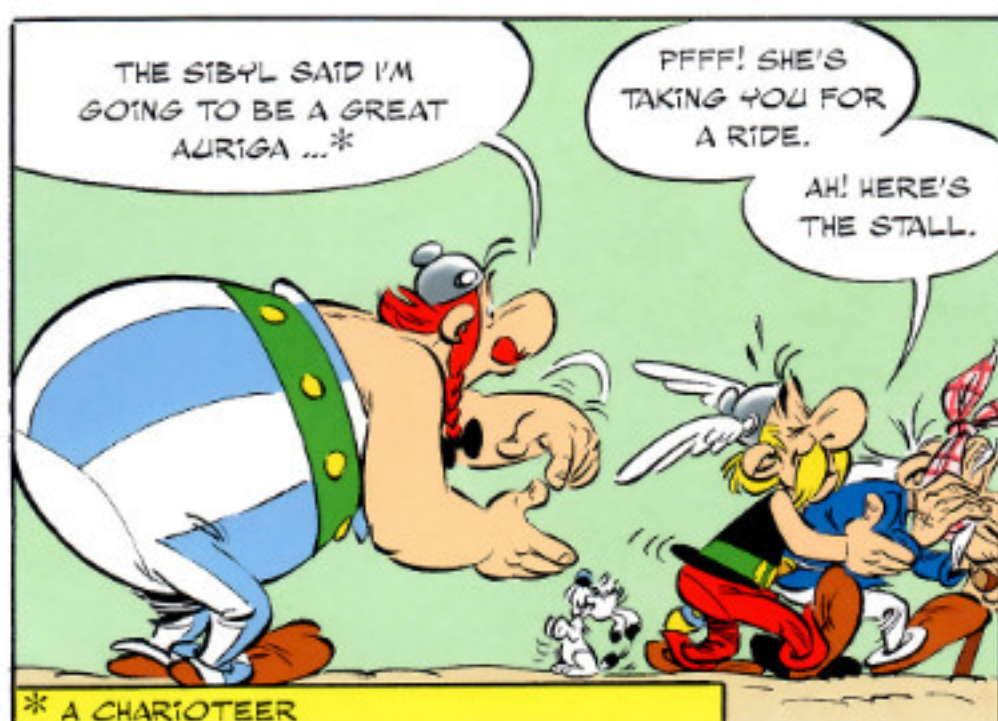
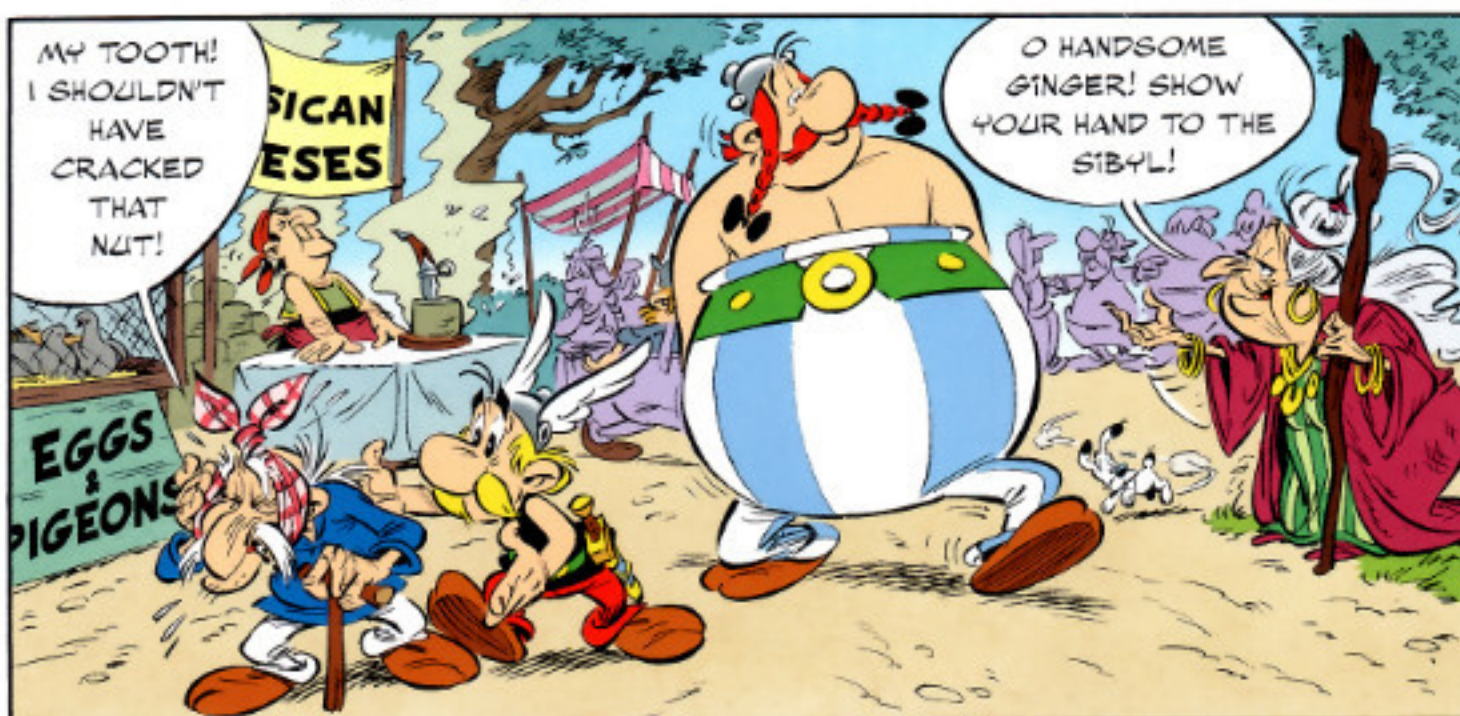
I KNOW, I'M IN  
CHARGE OF IT.



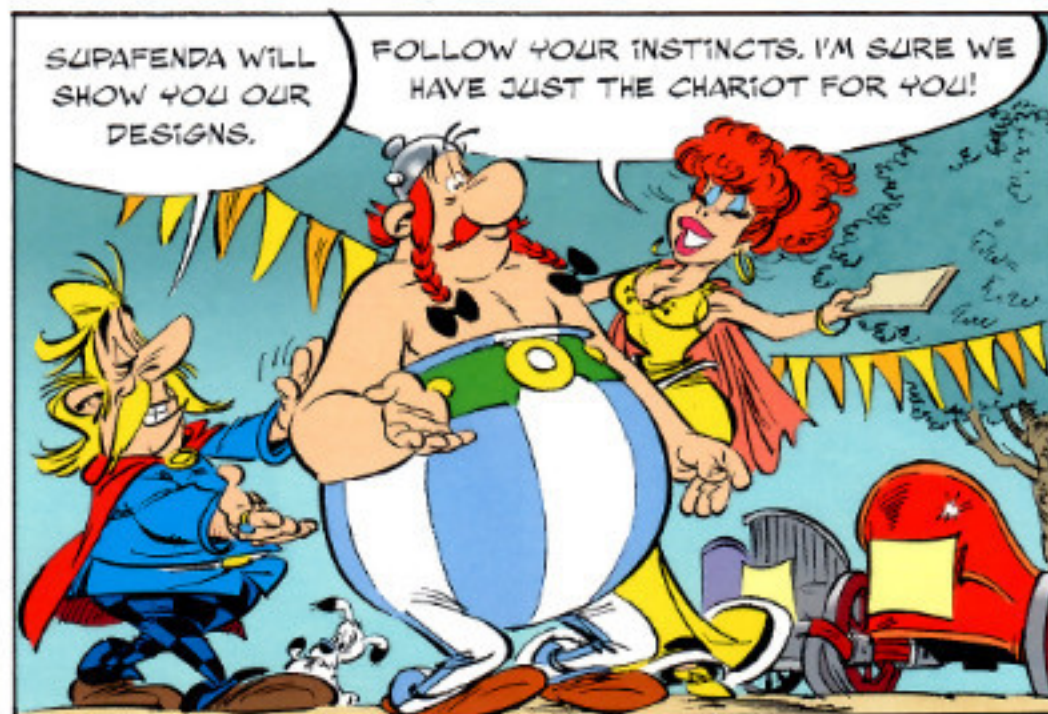
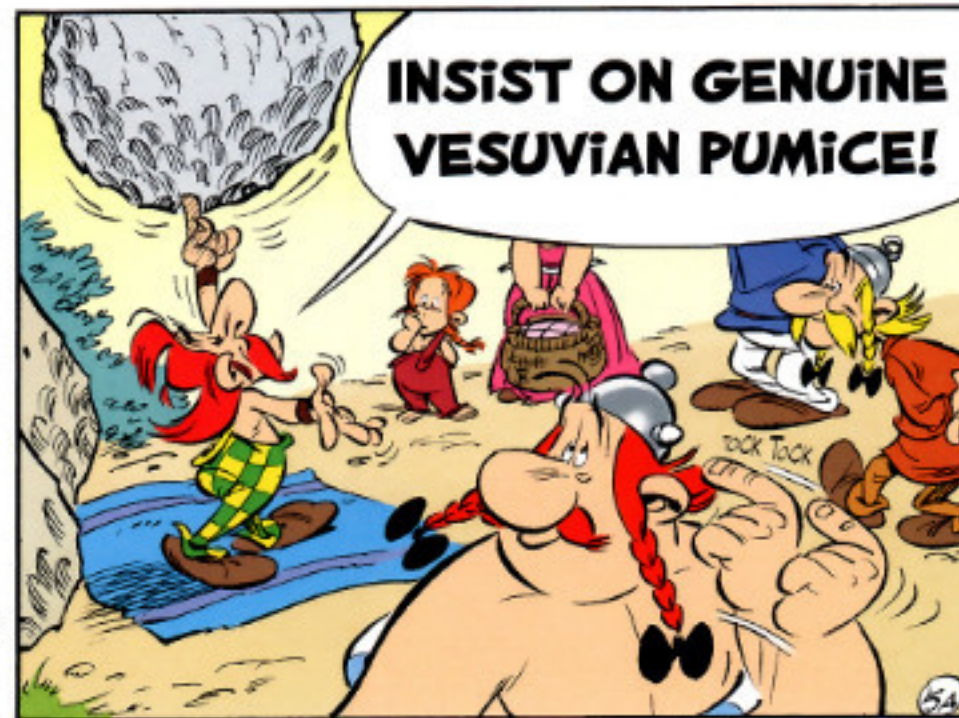
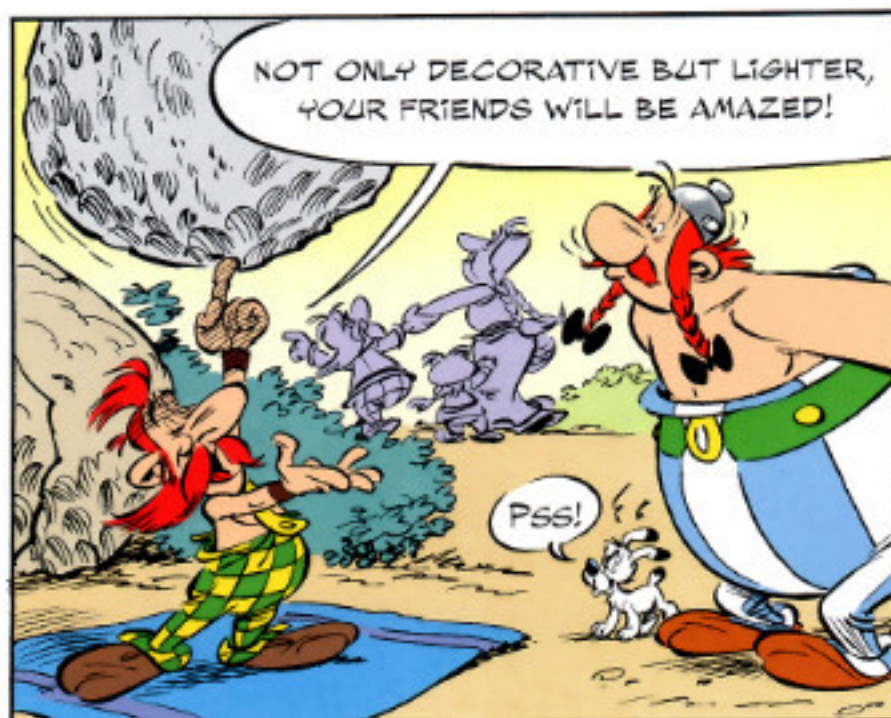
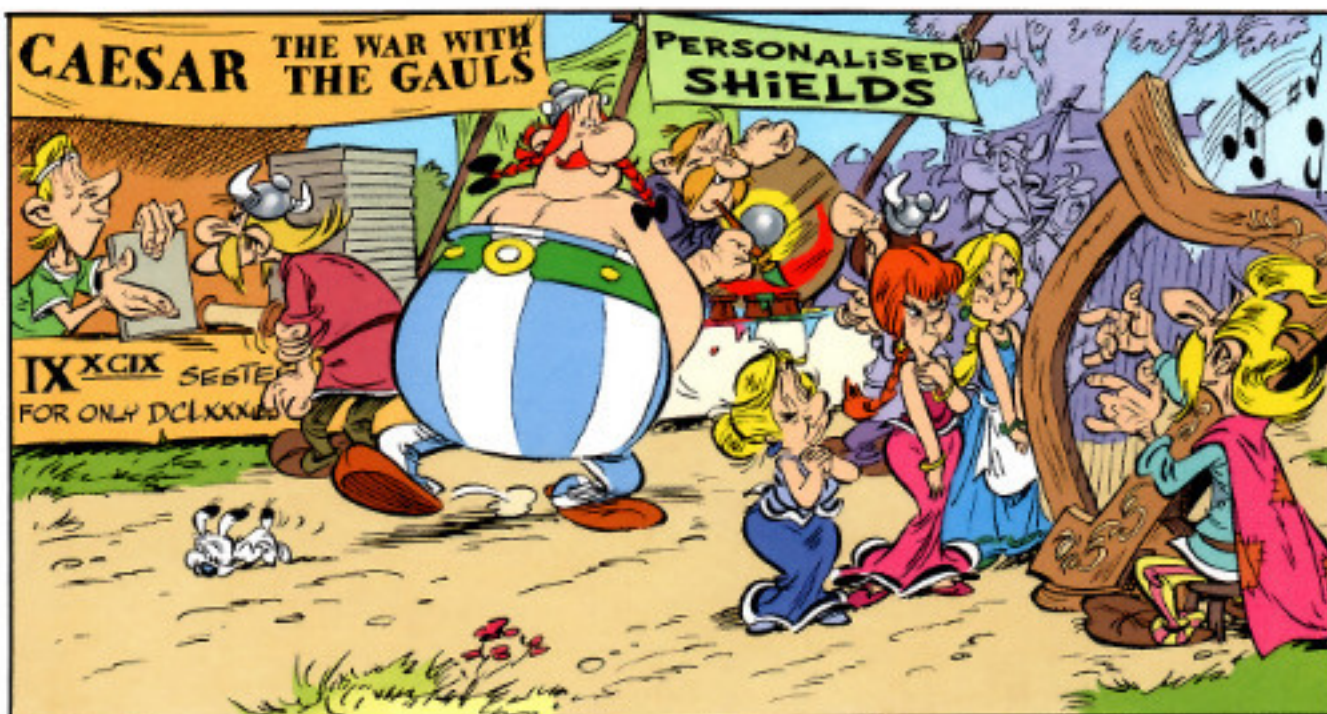
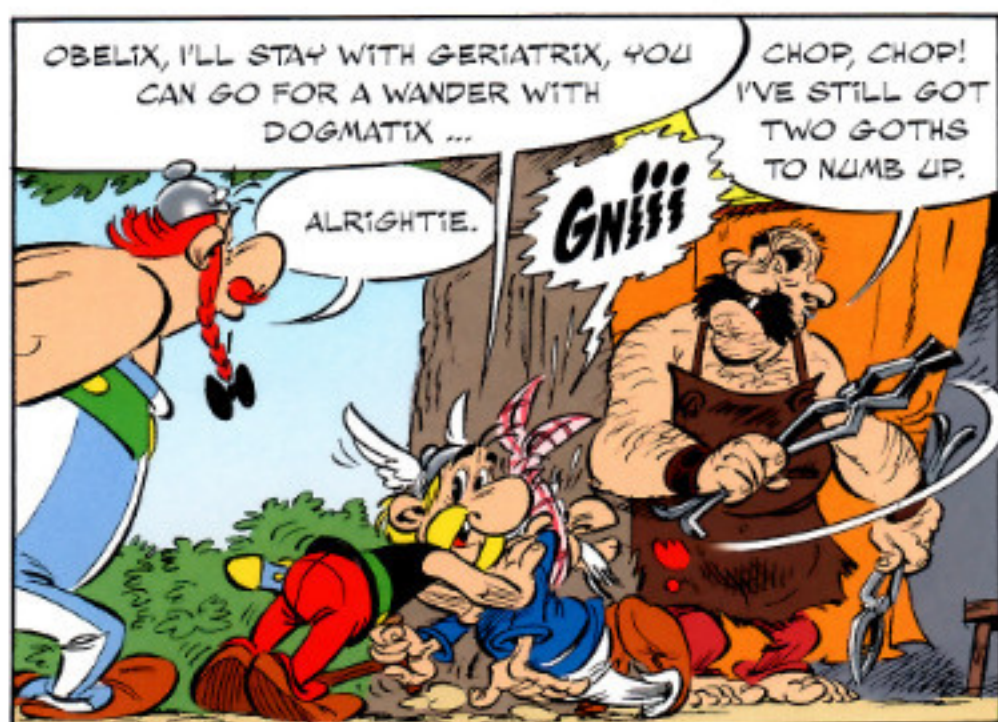




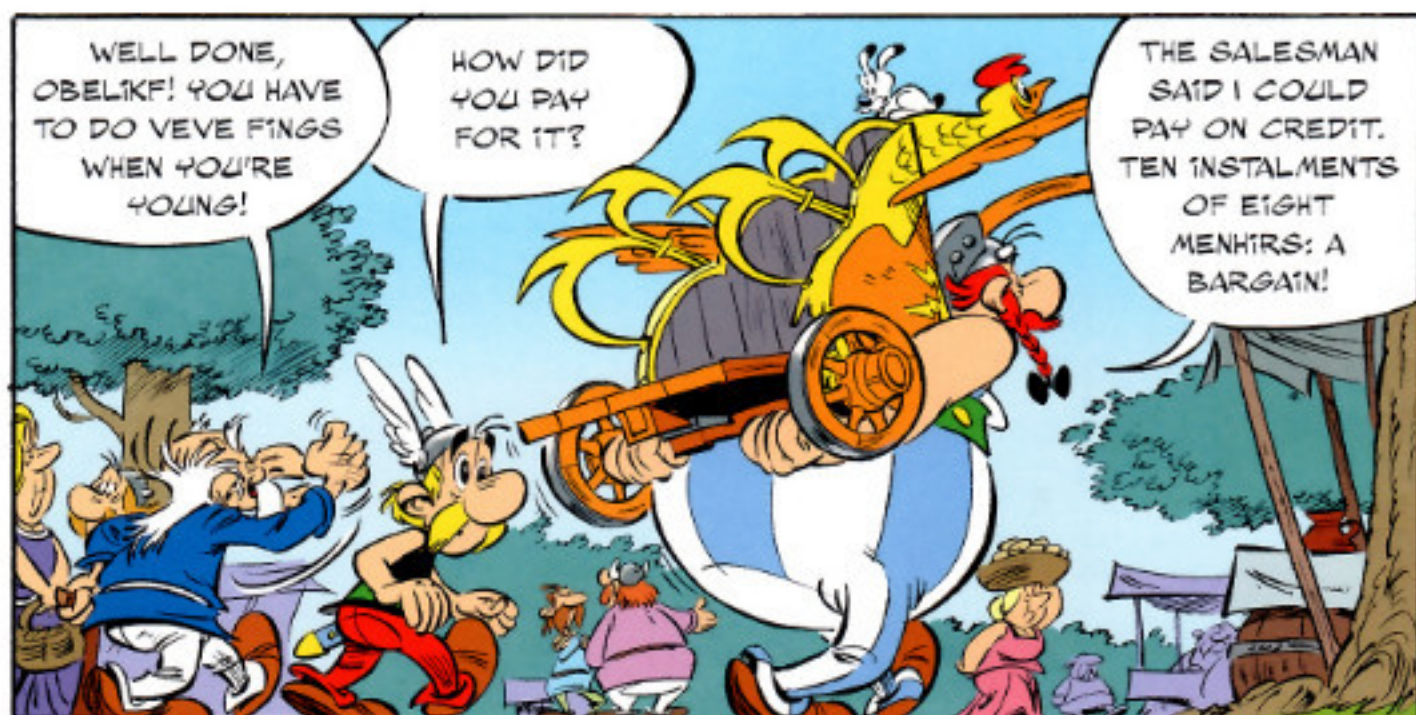
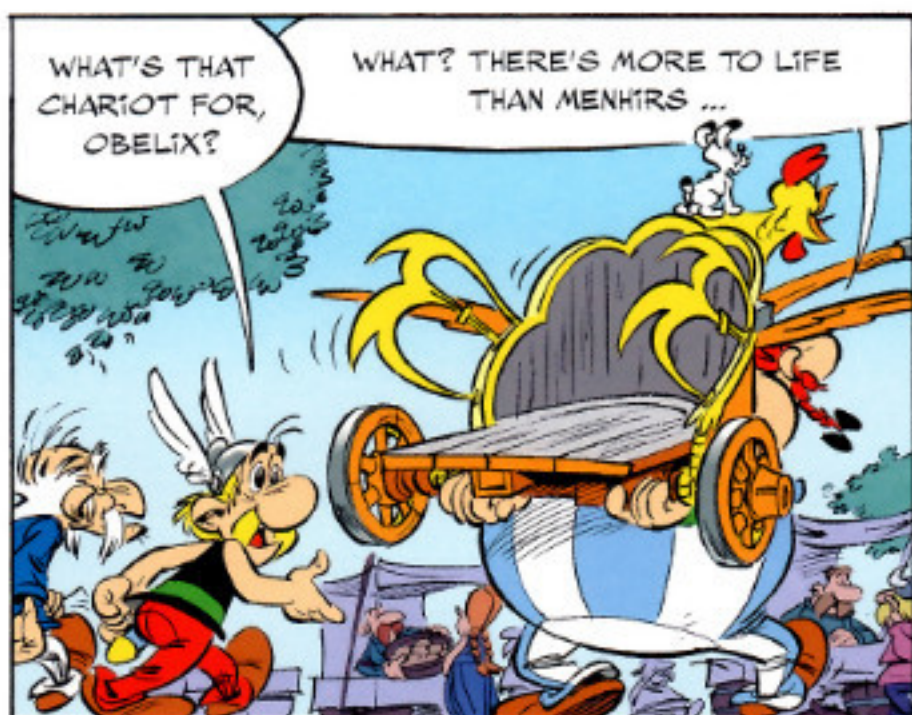
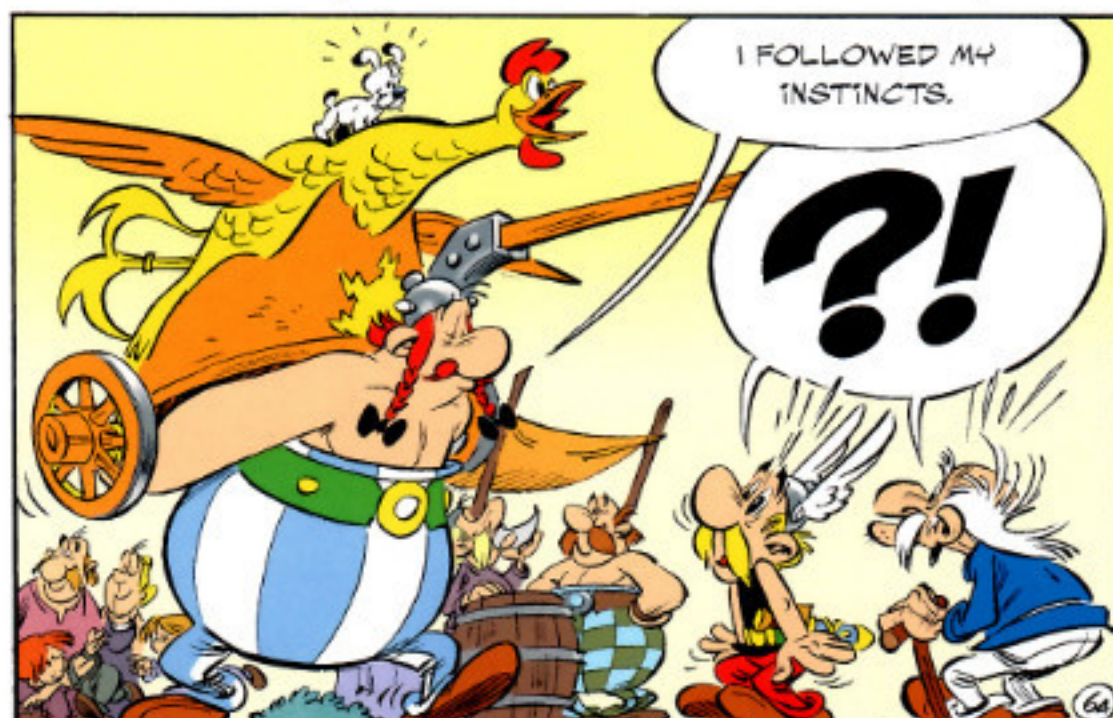
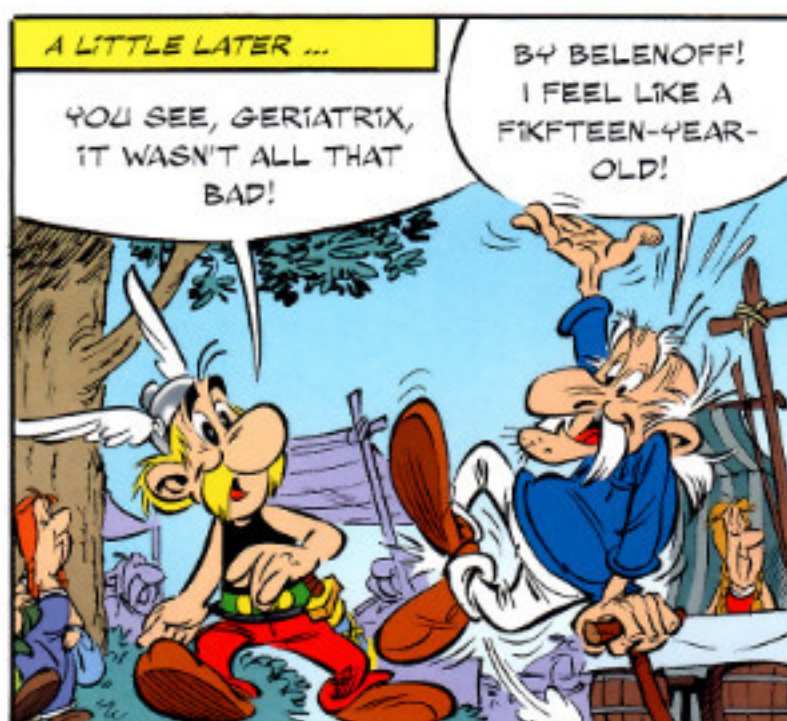




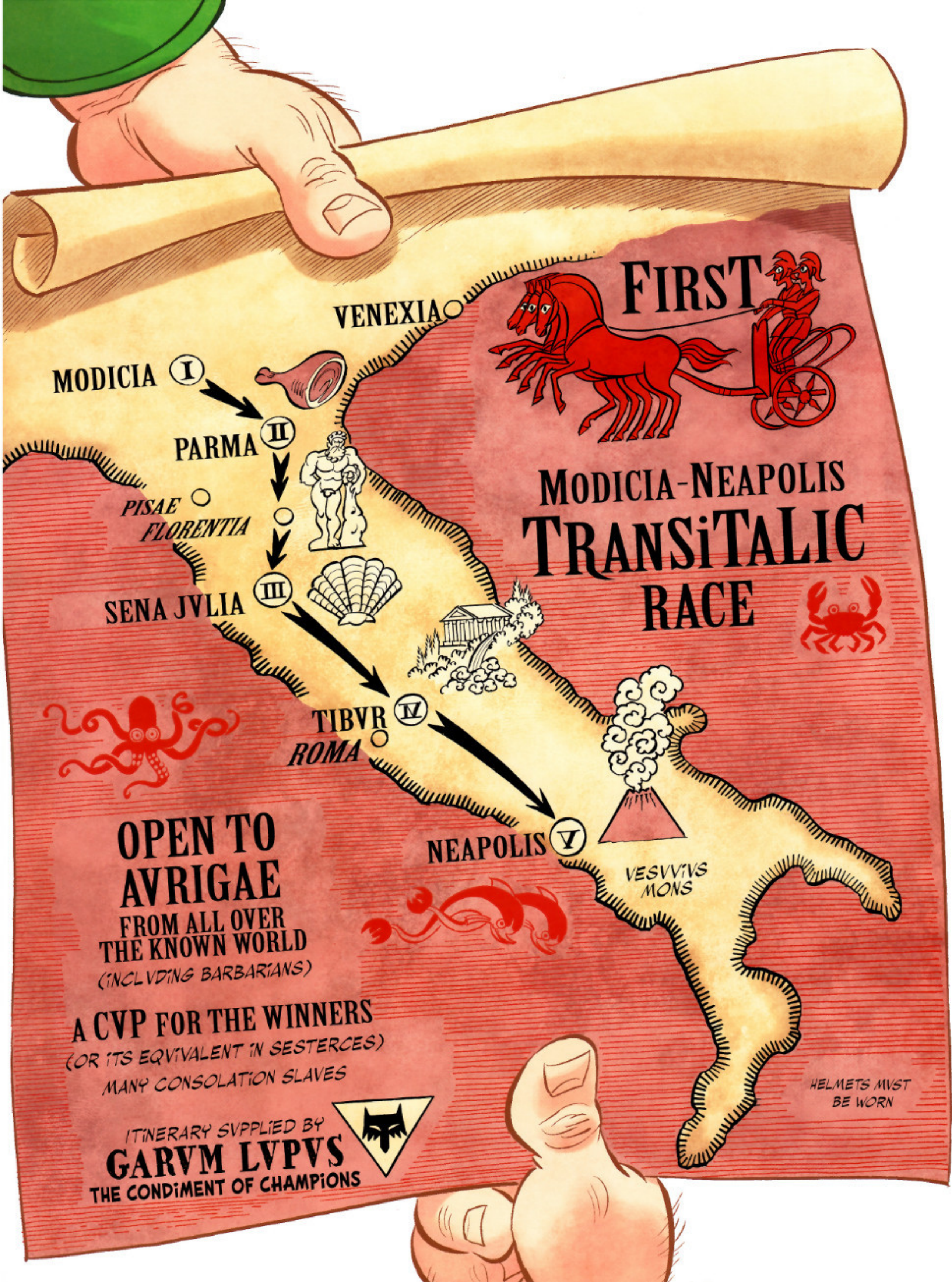












**FIRST**

**MODICIA-NEAPOLIS  
TRANSiTALIC  
RACE**

MODICIA

I

PARMA

II

PISAE  
FLORENTIA

SENA JVLIA

III

TIBVR  
ROMA

IV

NEAPOLIS

V

VESVIVS  
MONS

**OPEN TO  
AVRIGAE**  
FROM ALL OVER  
THE KNOWN WORLD  
(INCLVDING BARBARIANS)

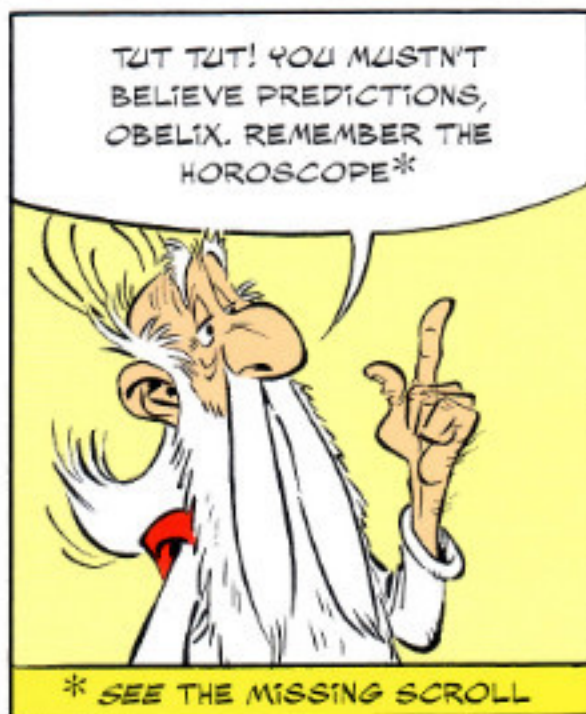
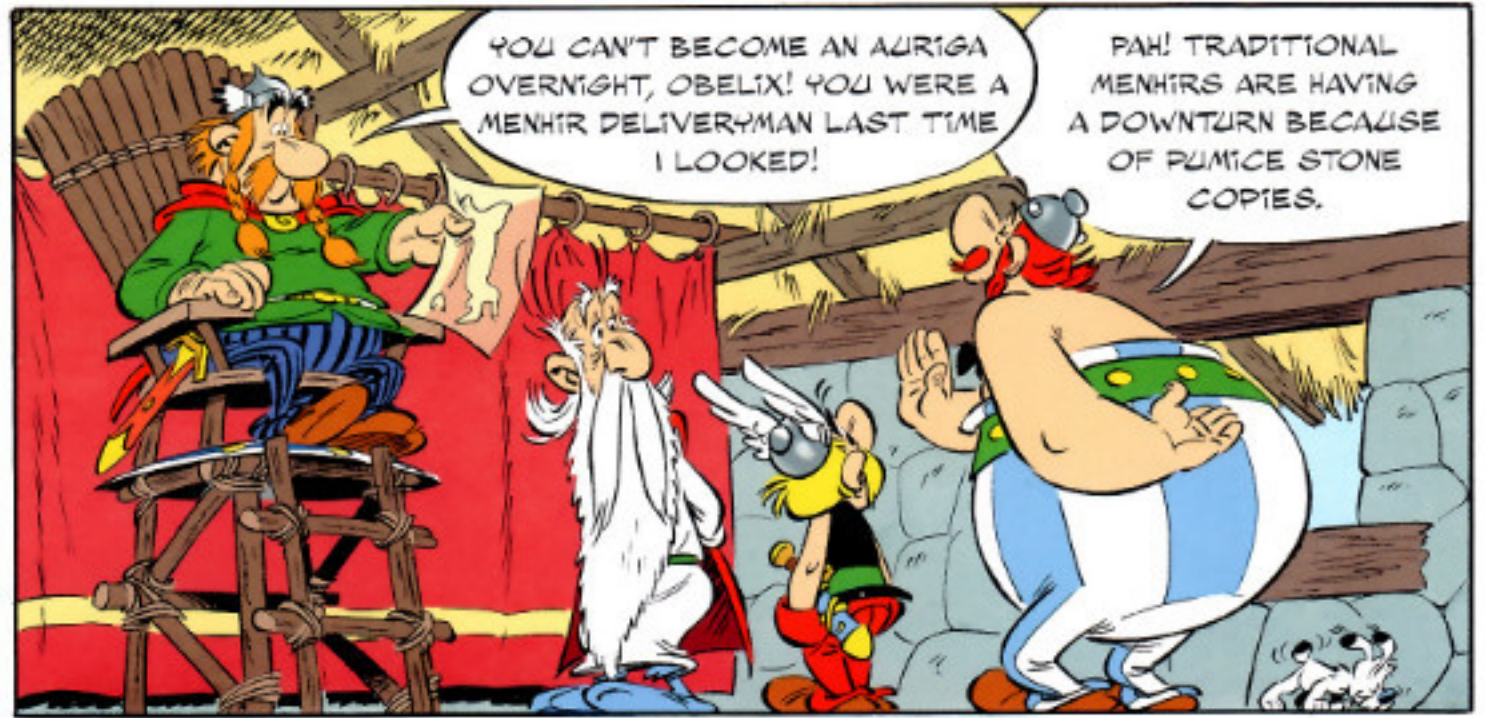
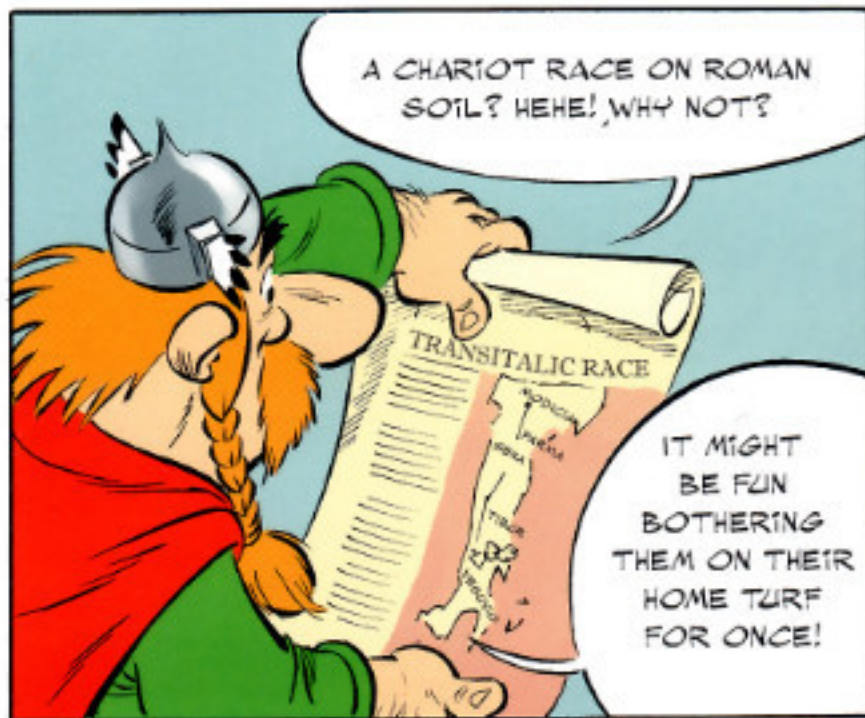
**A CVP FOR THE WINNERS**  
(OR ITS EQVIVALENT IN SESTERCES)  
MANY CONSOLATION SLAVES

ITINERARY SVPLIED BY  
**GARVM LVPVS**  
THE CONDIMENT OF CHAMPIONS

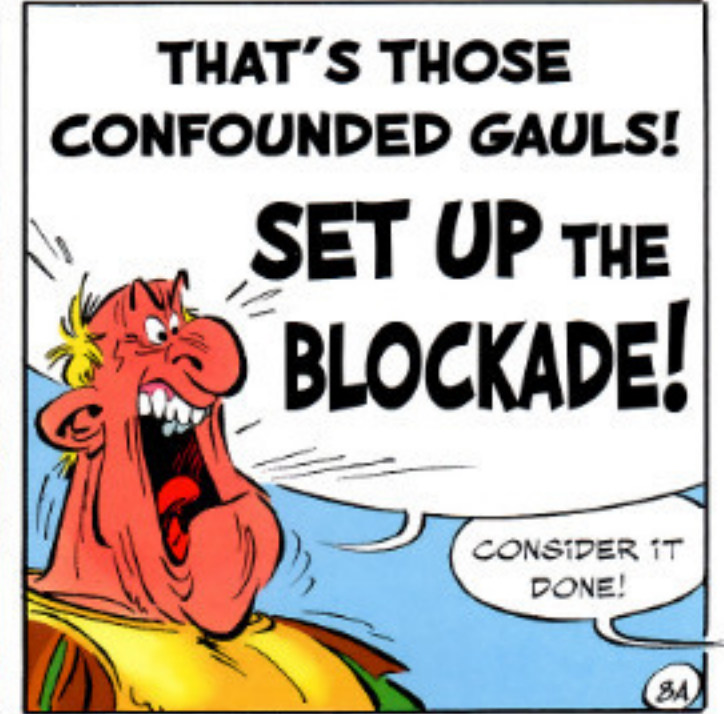
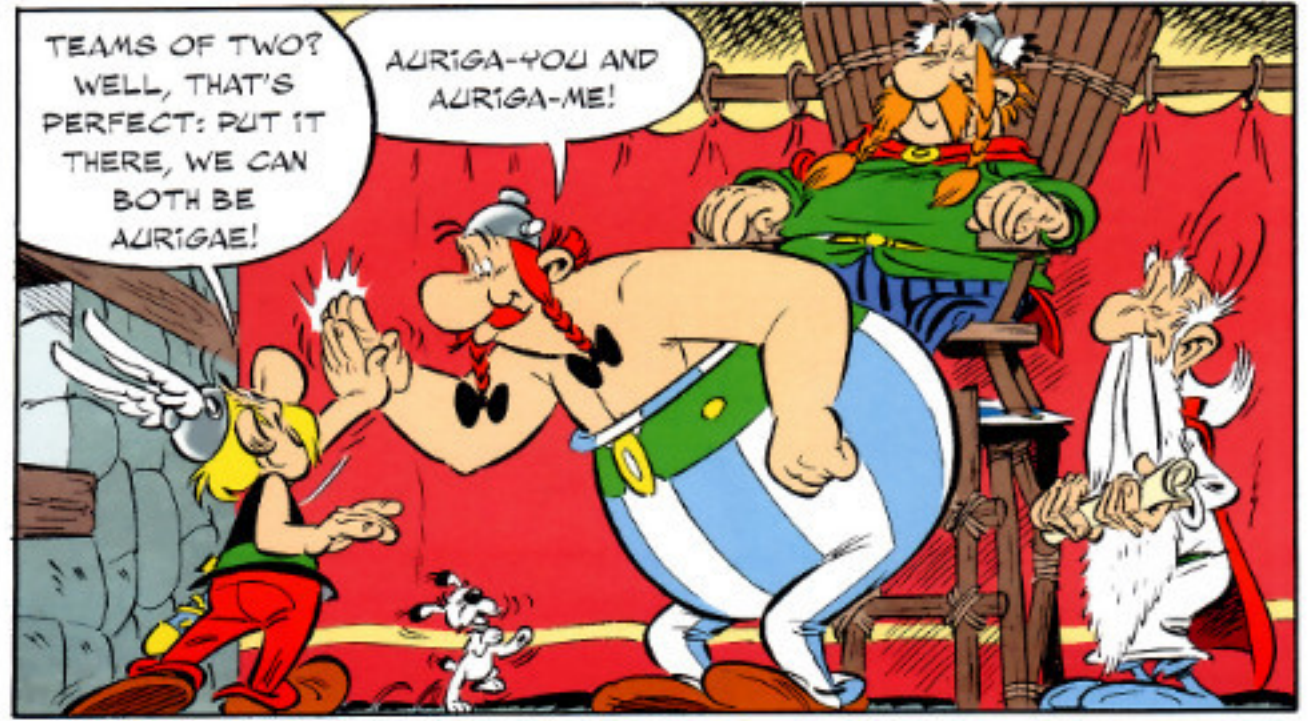
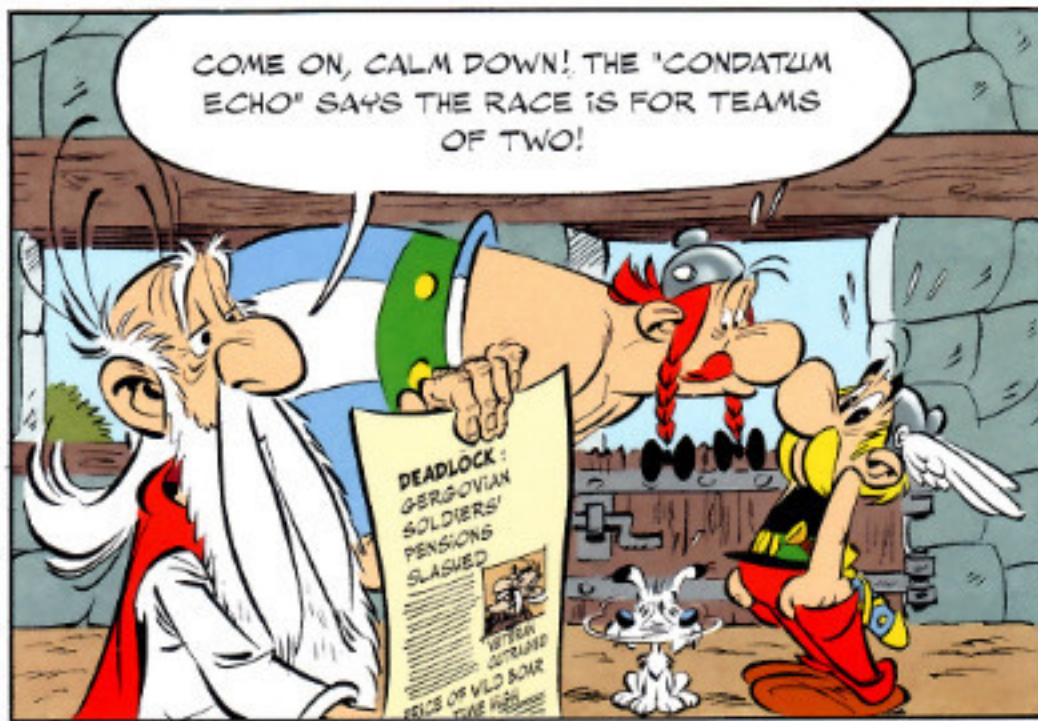


HELMETS MVST  
BE WORN

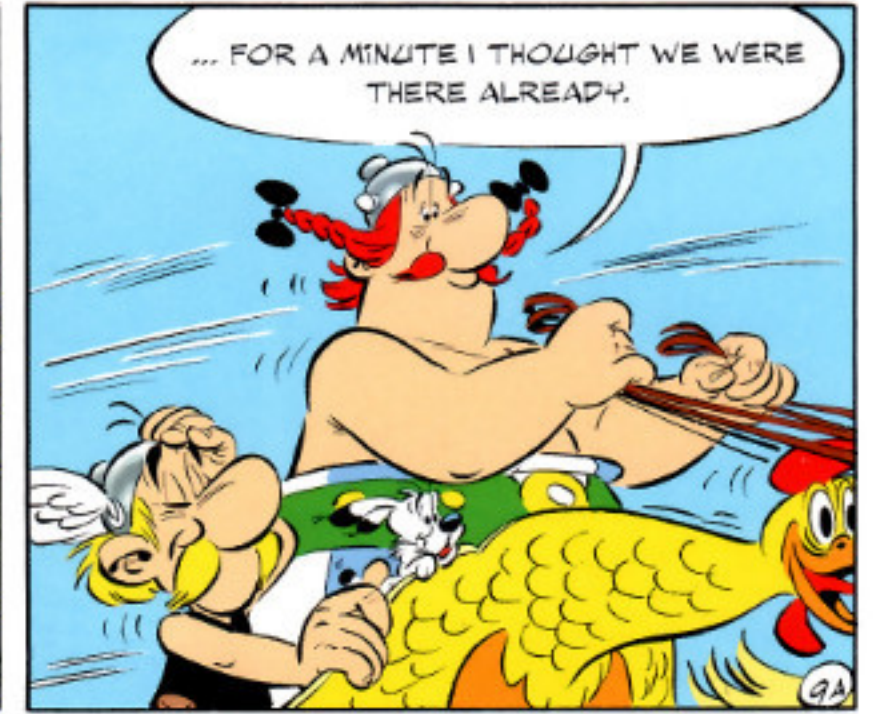
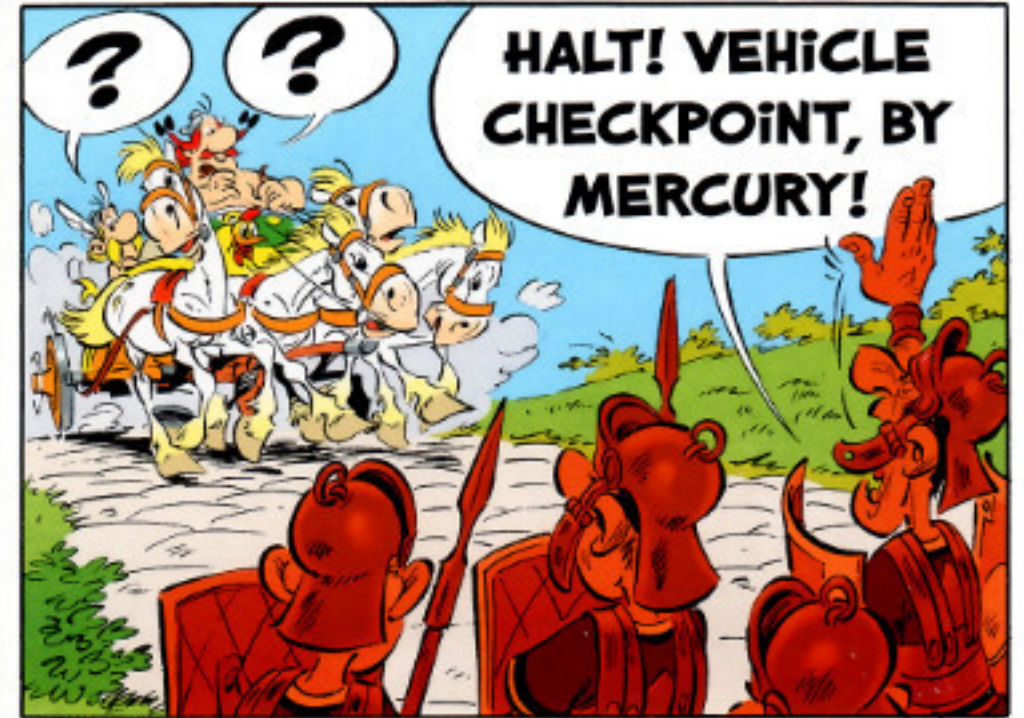
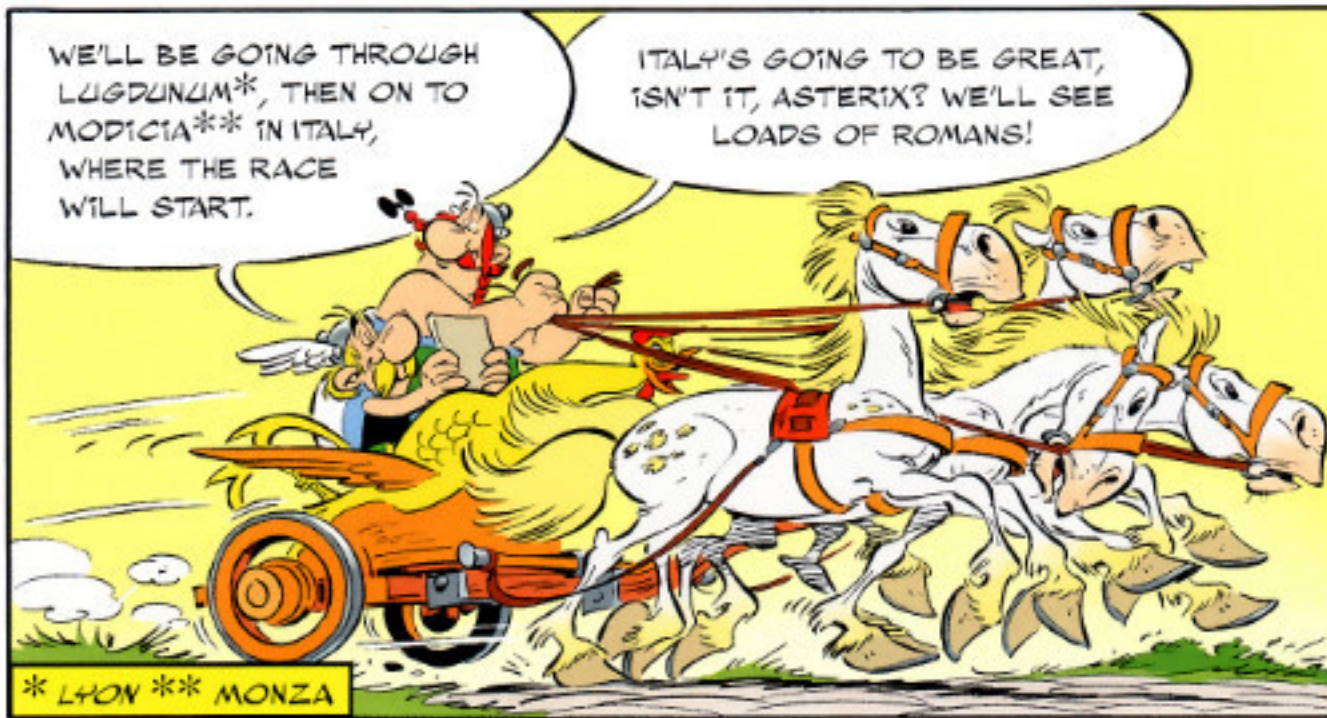




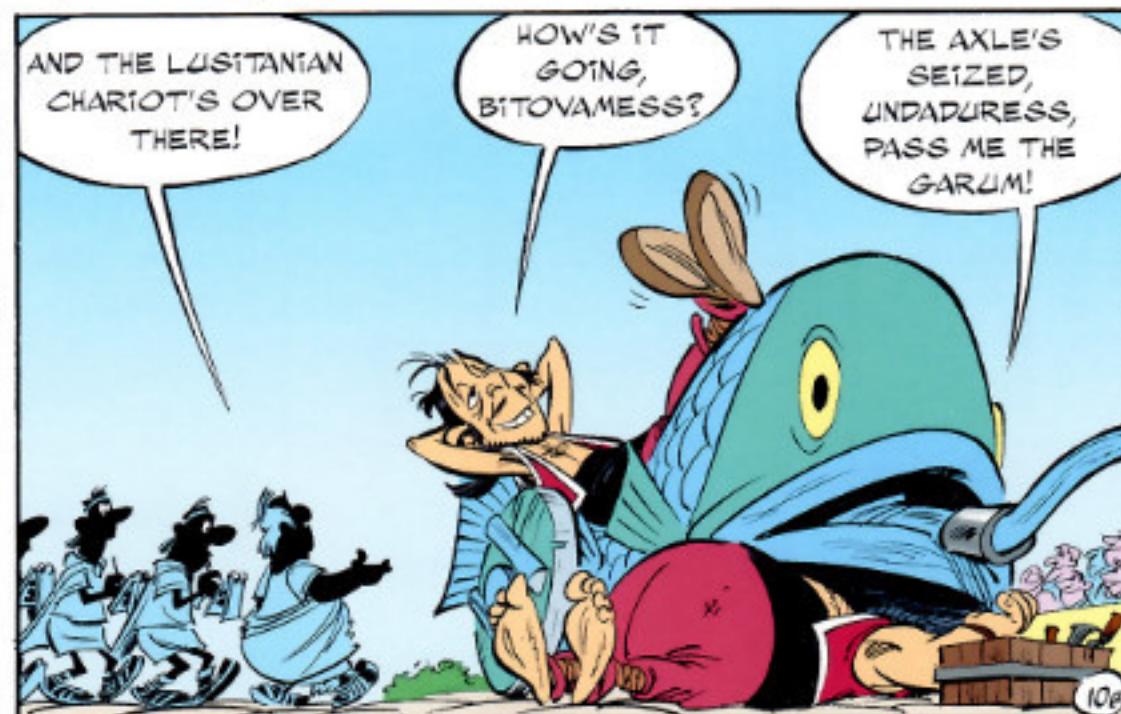
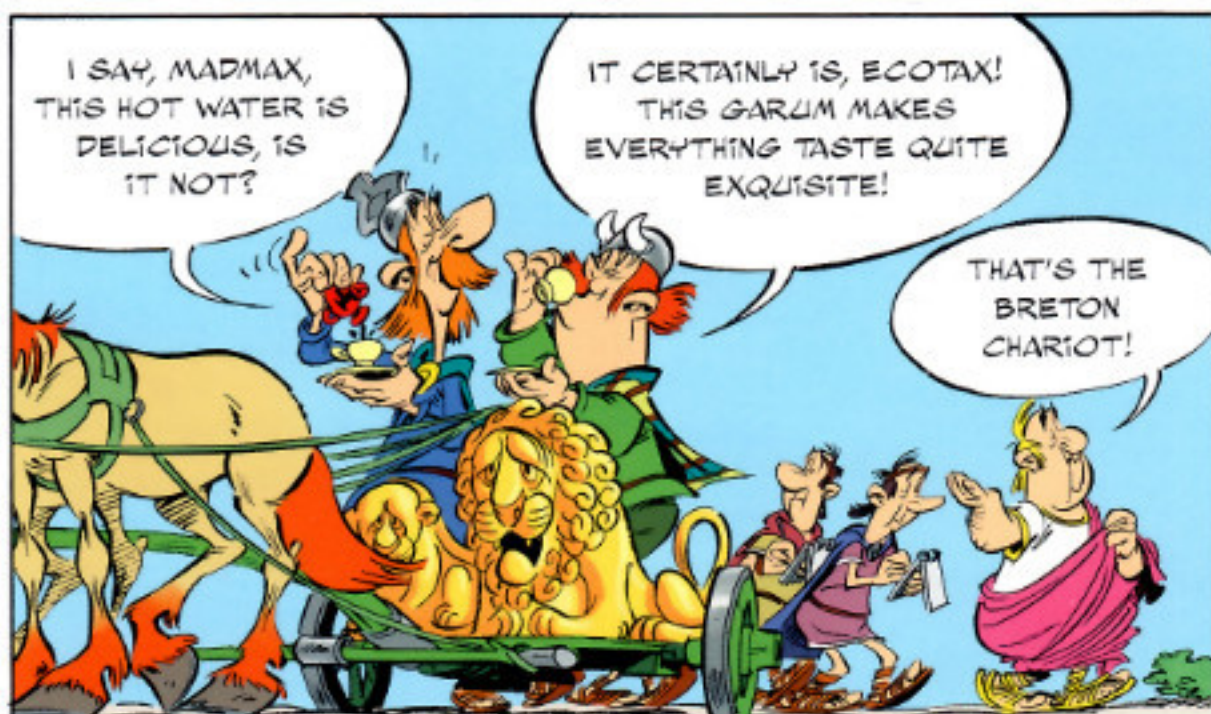
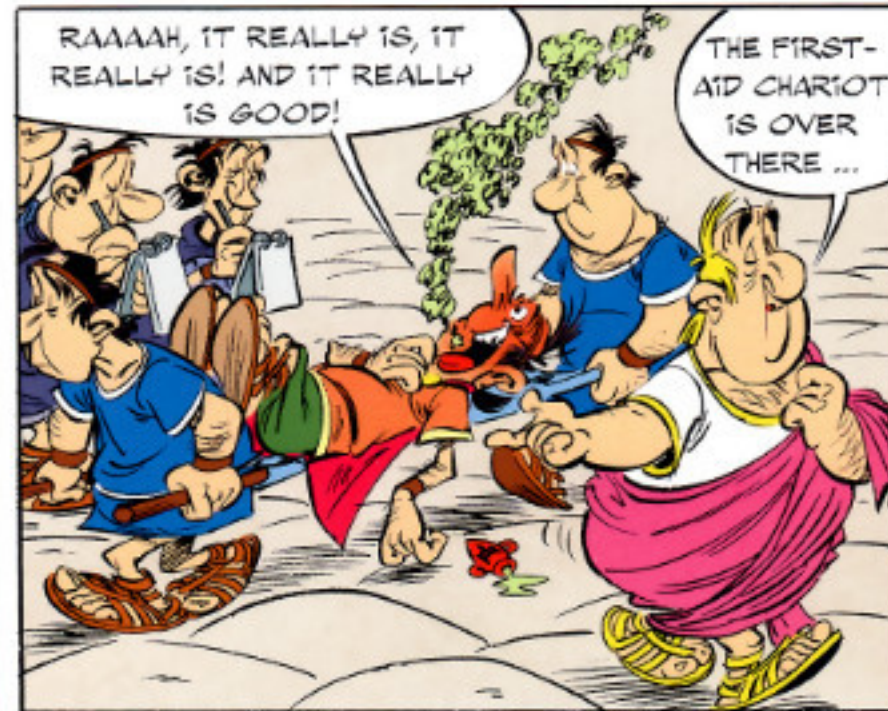
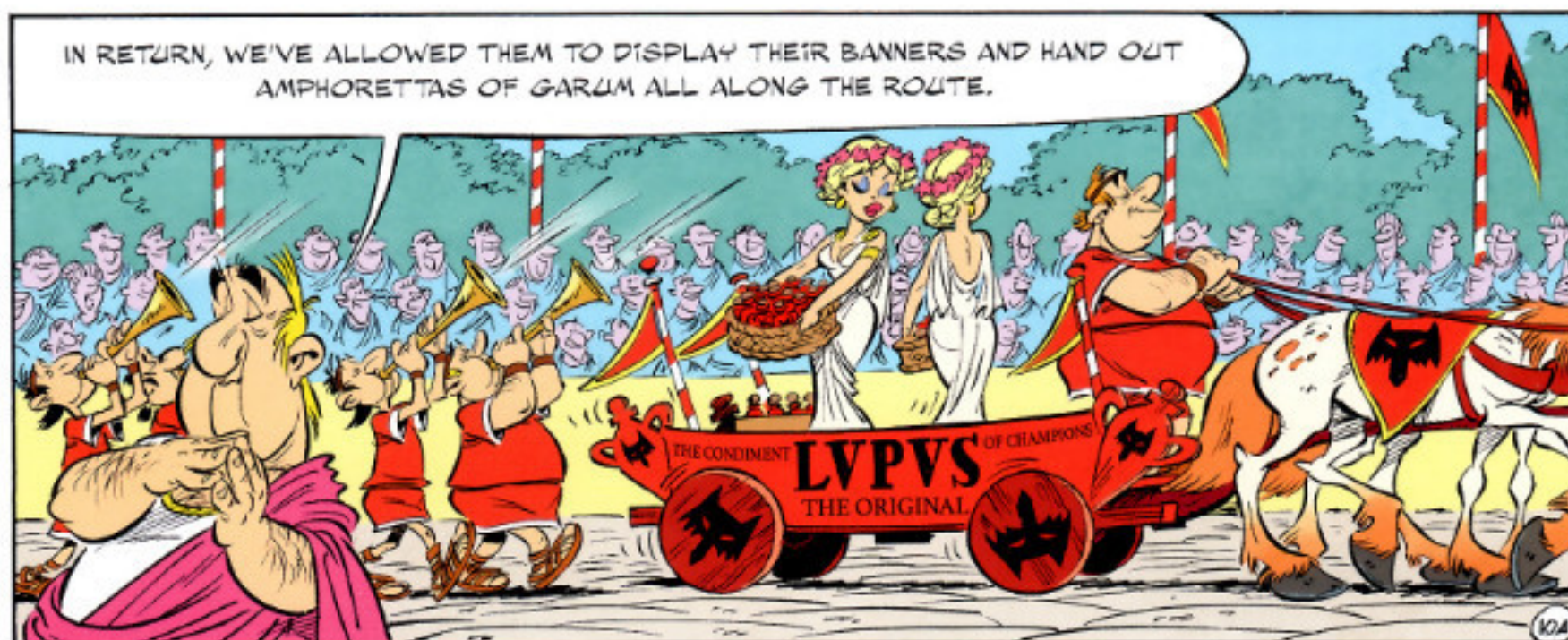
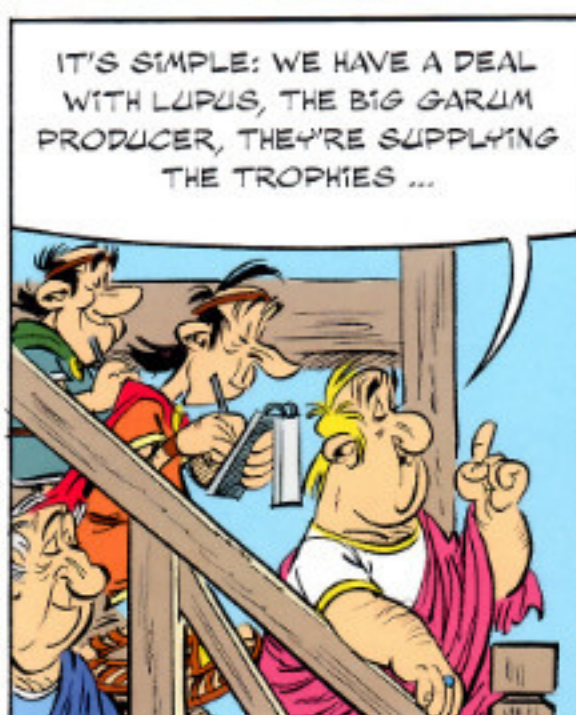
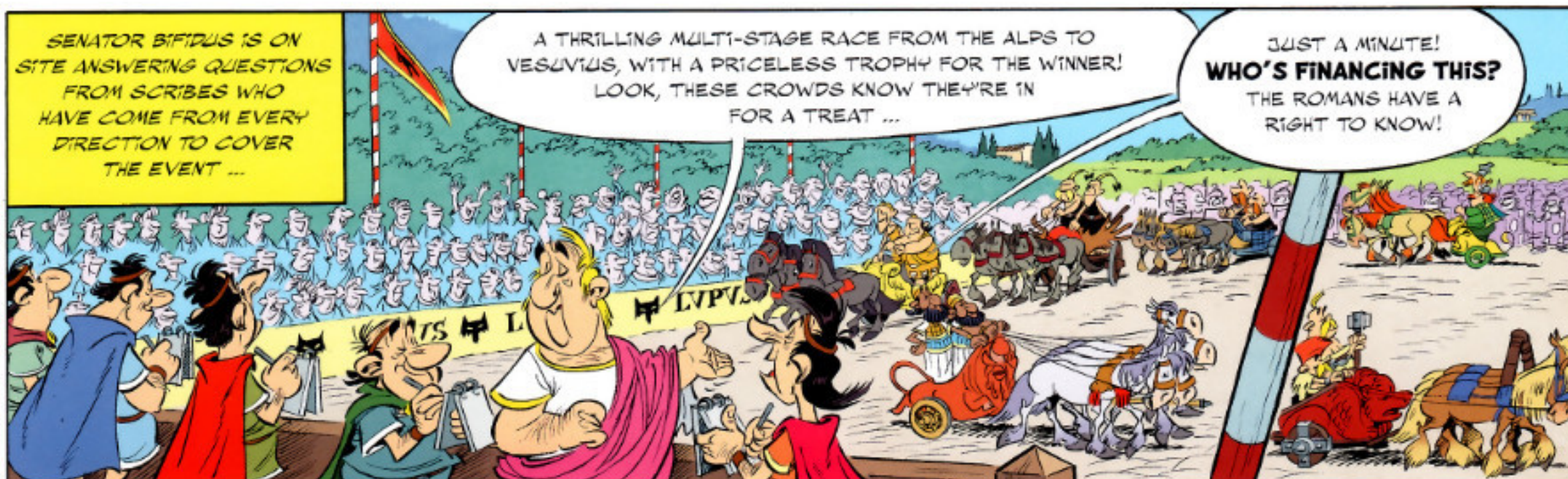




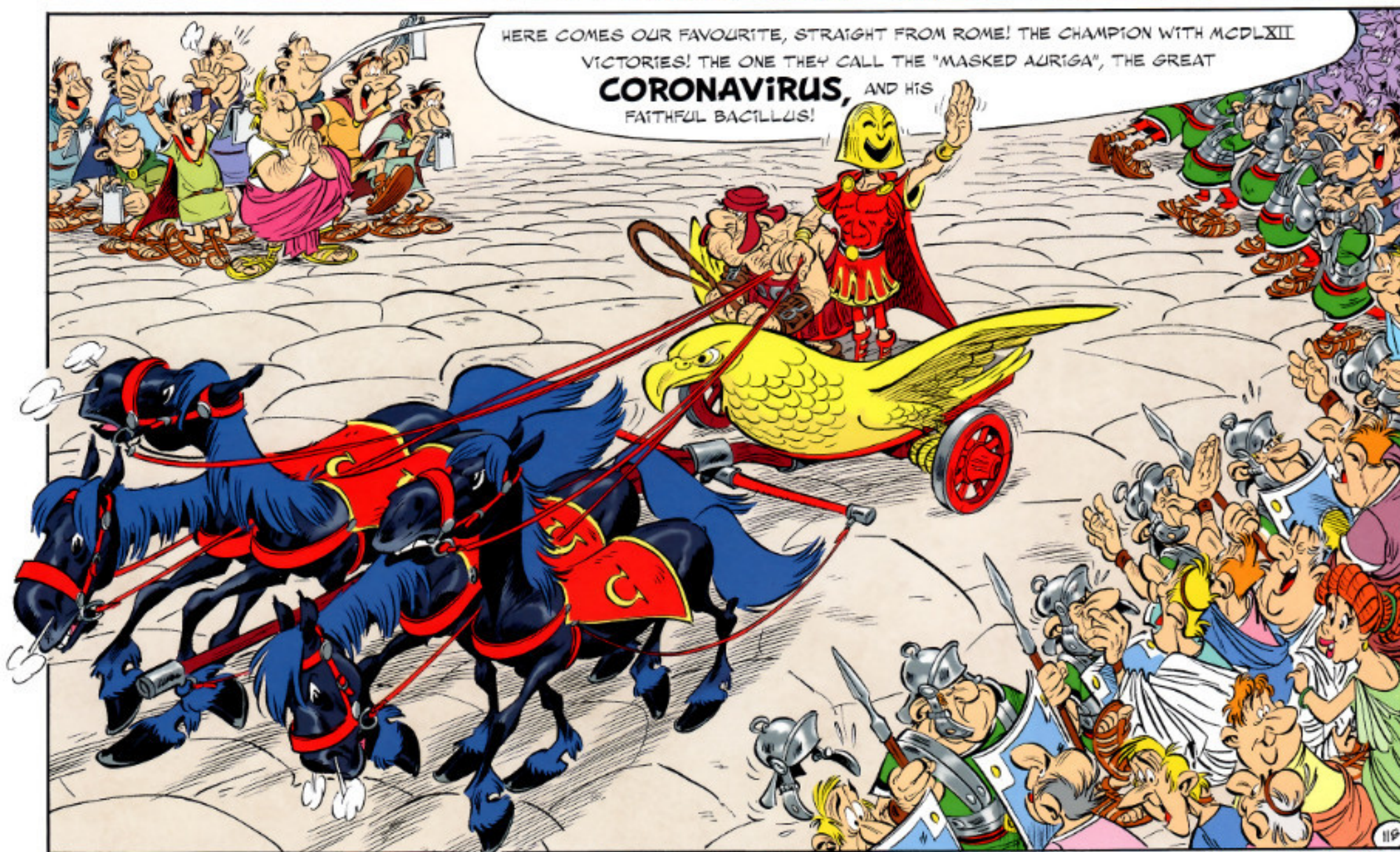














IN THE NAME OF JULIUS CAESAR AND WITH  
 GENEROUS SPONSORSHIP FROM LUPUS  
 GARUM, I, BIFIDUS, PRONOUNCE ... UM ...

"THE GREAT  
 TRANSITALIC  
 RACE  
 OPEN."

... PRONOUNCE THE  
 GREAT TRANSITALIC  
 RACE OPEN!

LVPVS

THE CONDIMENT  
 OF CHAMPIONS

CORONAVIRUS CORONAVIRUS CORONAVIRUS

LOOKS LIKE IT'S  
 ALL ABOUT THAT  
 ROMAN!

WELL, WHAT DO  
 YOU EXPECT?

HE'S GOT A NICE  
 SMILE.

IT'S A  
 MASK,  
 OBELIX!

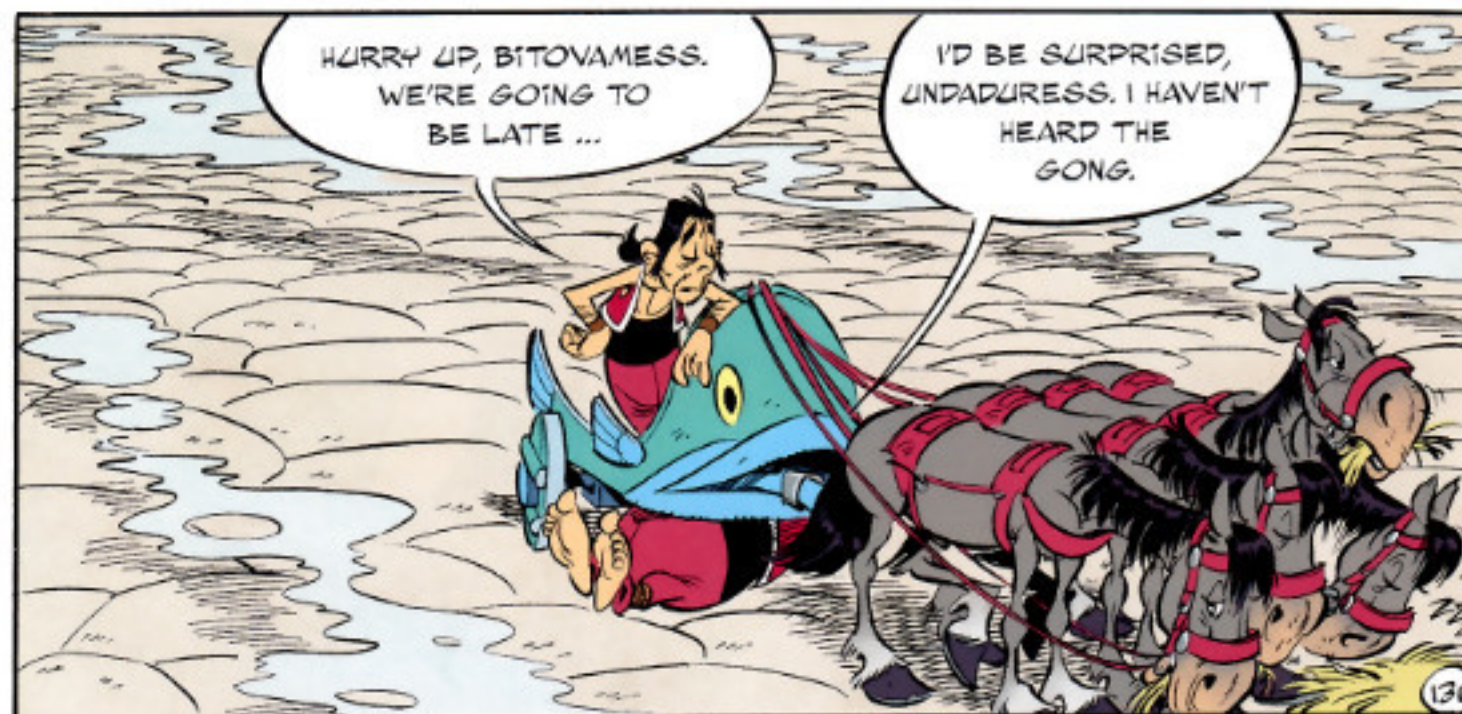
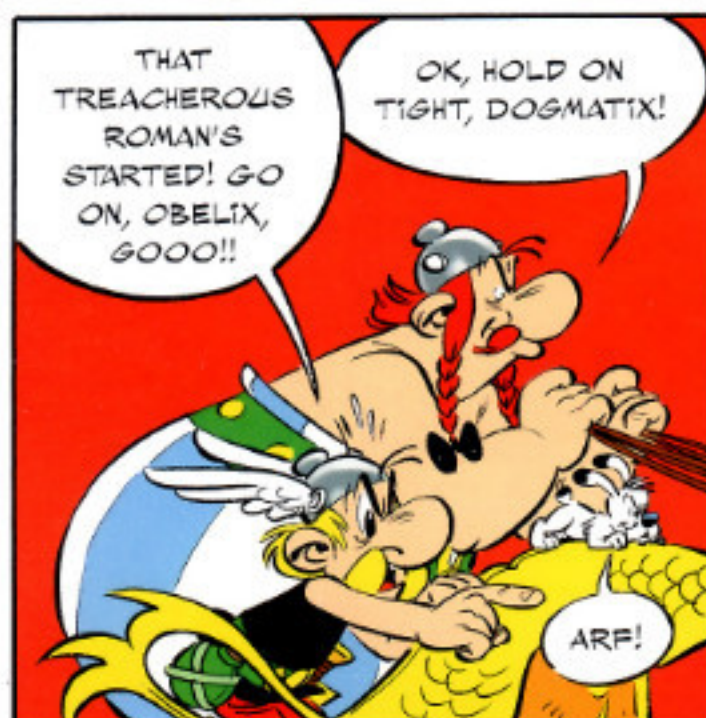
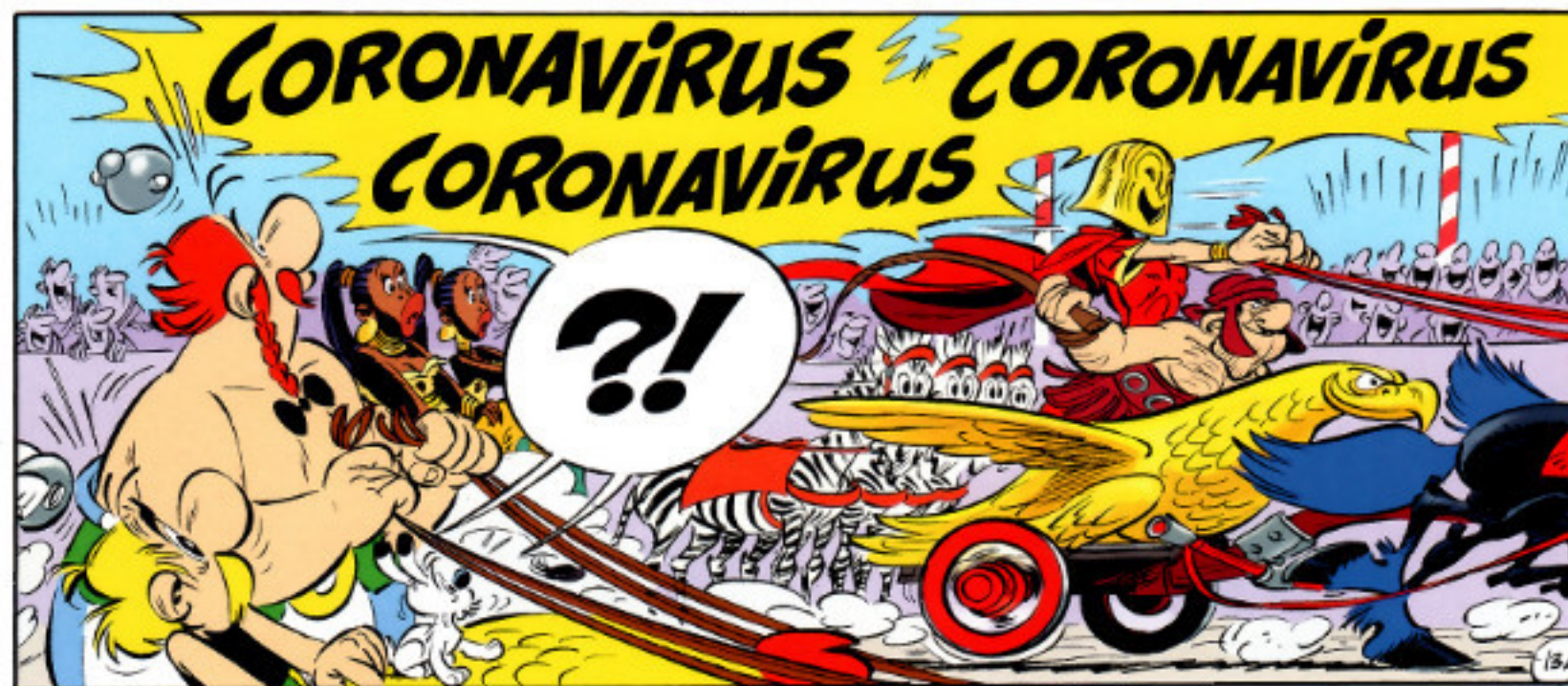
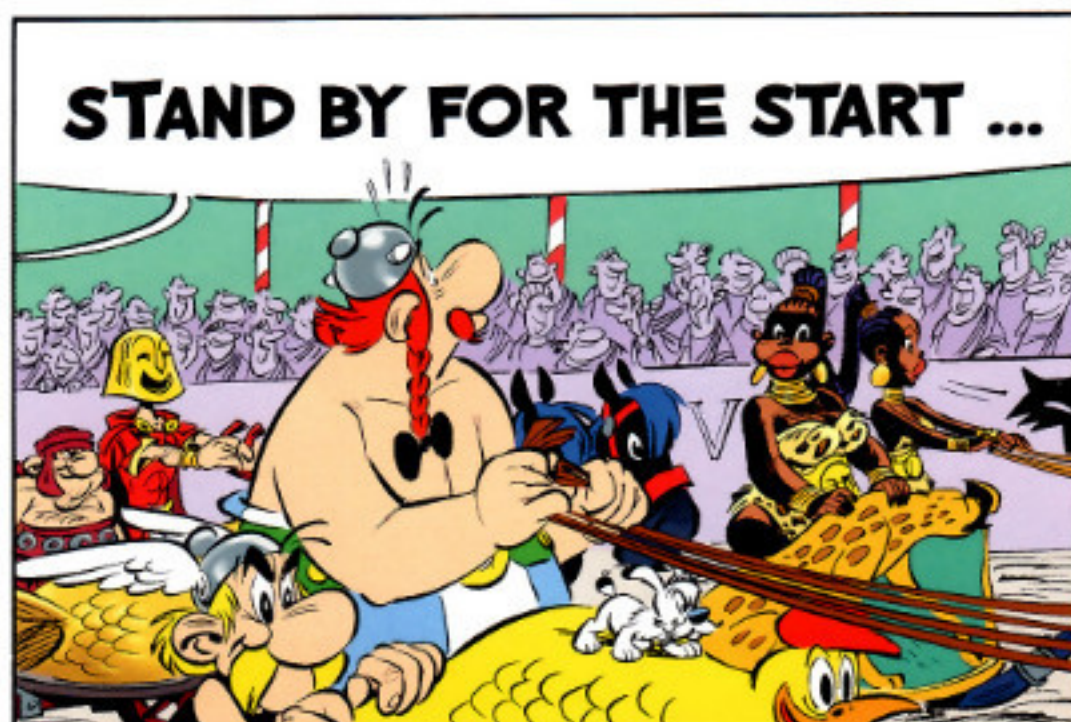
THE WINNER WILL RECEIVE  
 THE TRANSITALIC CUP, A  
 SYMBOL OF OUR GLORIOUS,  
 FAR-REACHING  
 ROMAN ROADS ...

\* ... OR ITS  
 EQUIVALENT  
 IN SESTER  
 ...

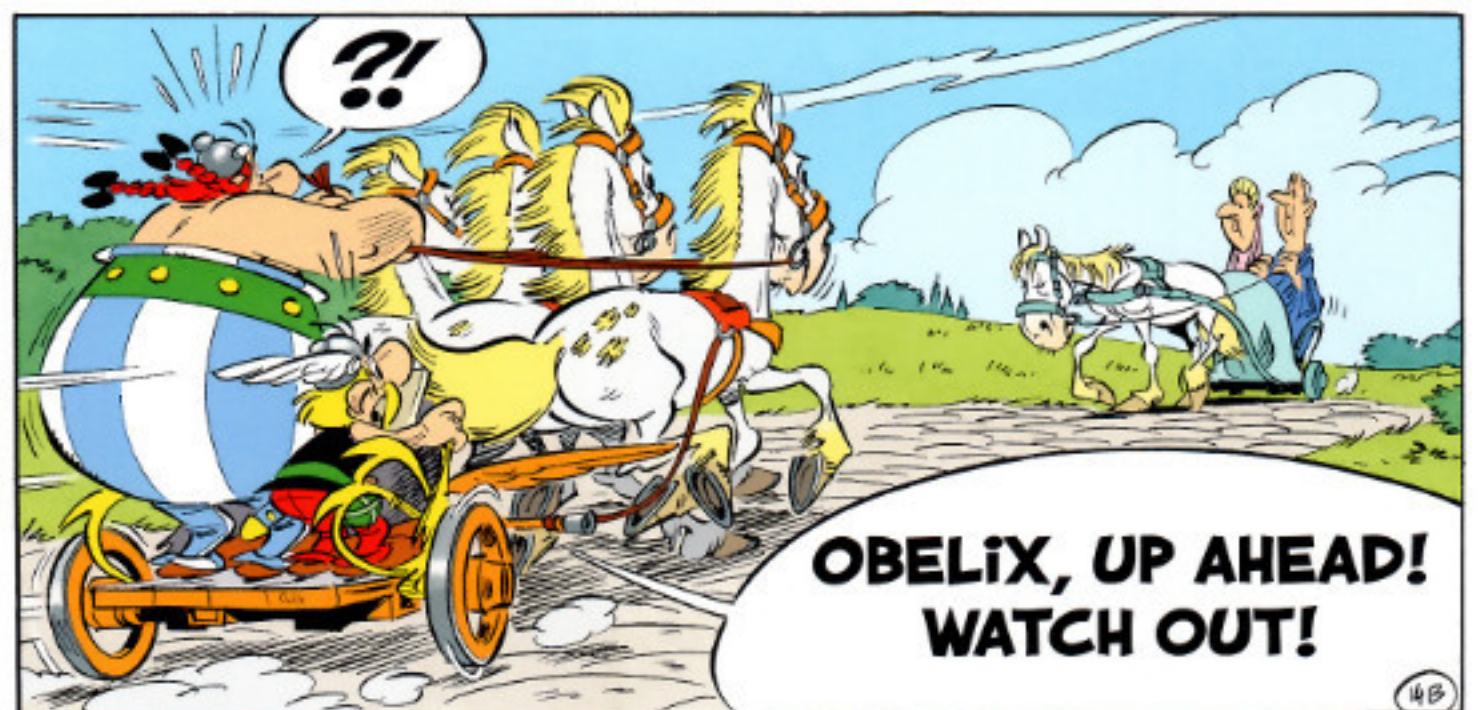
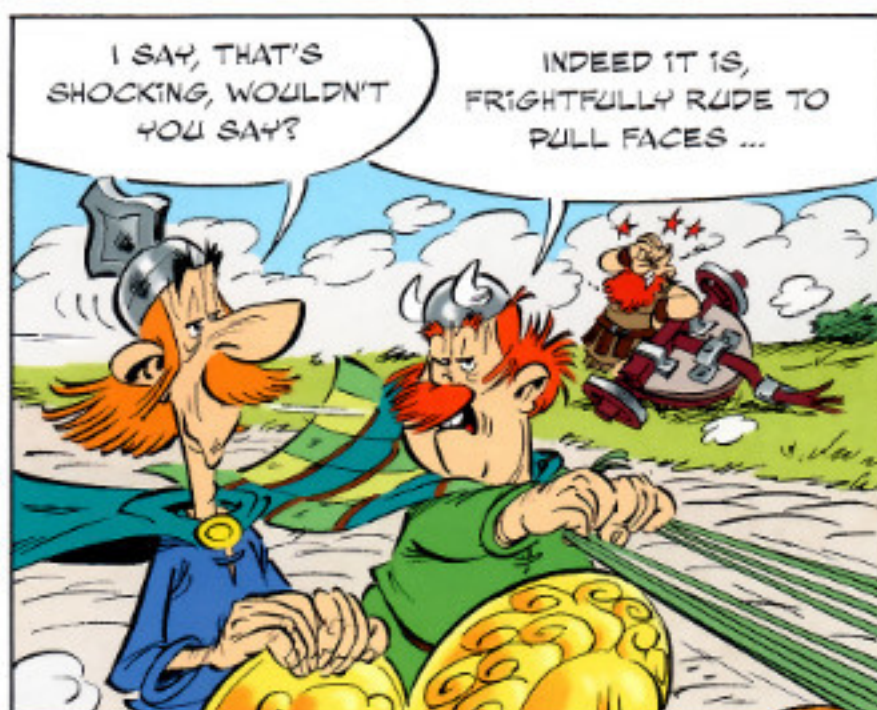
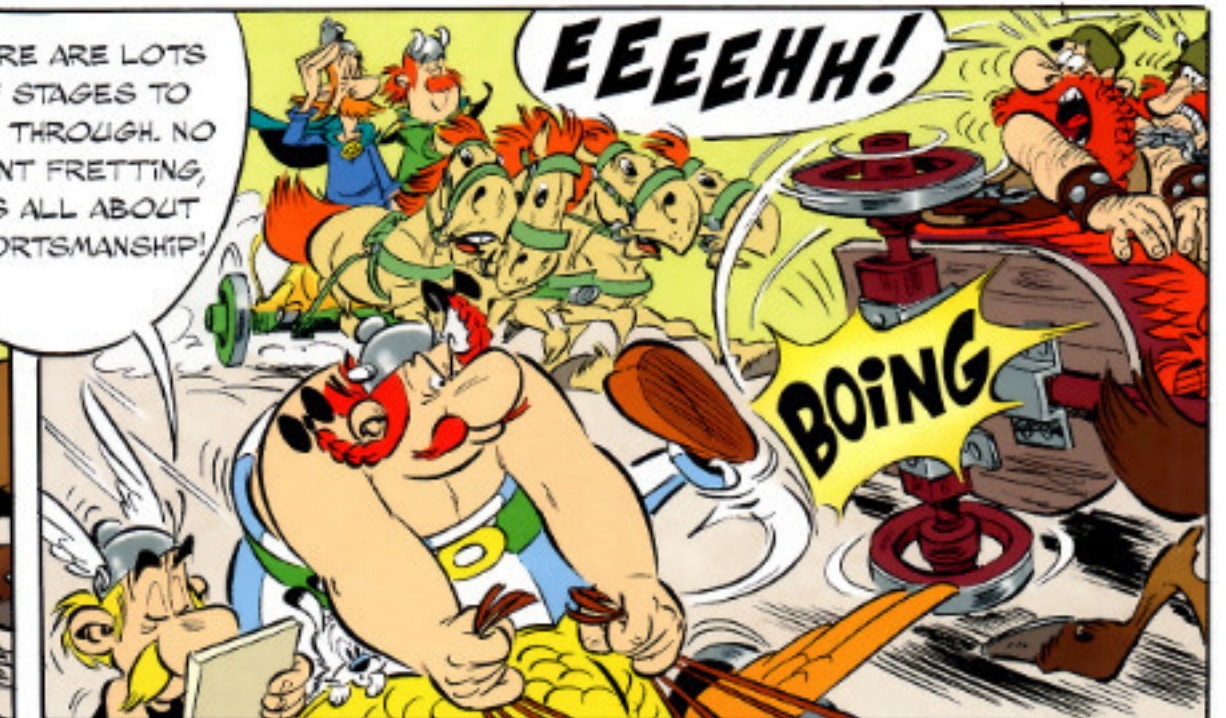
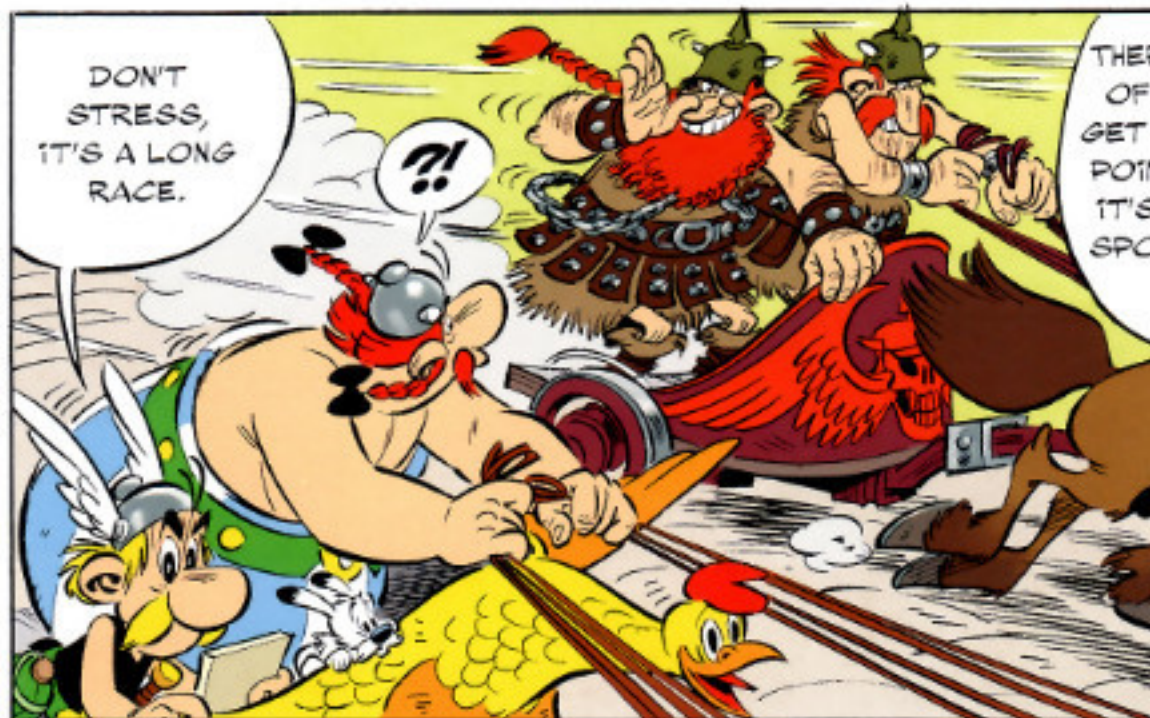
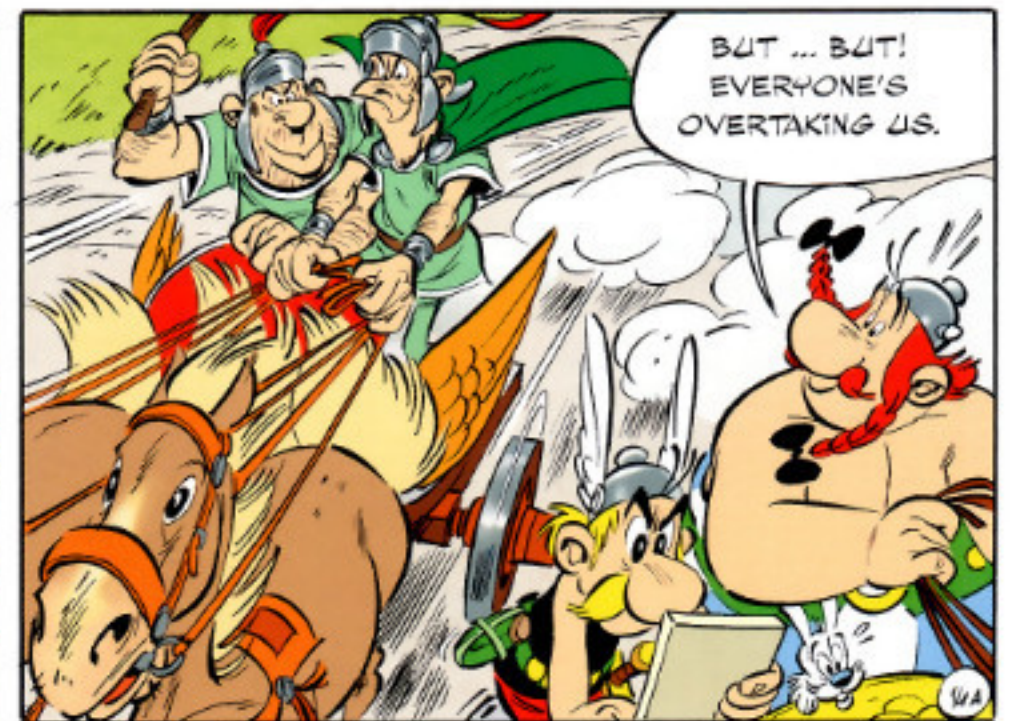
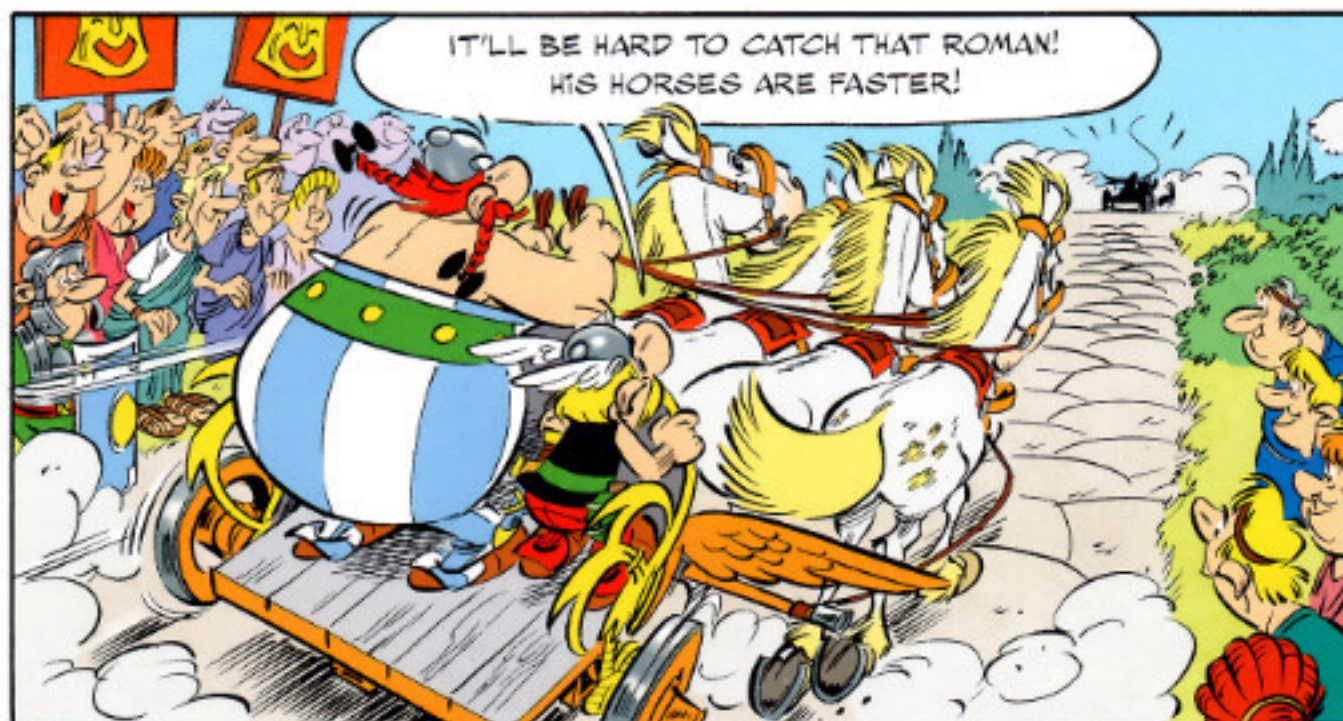
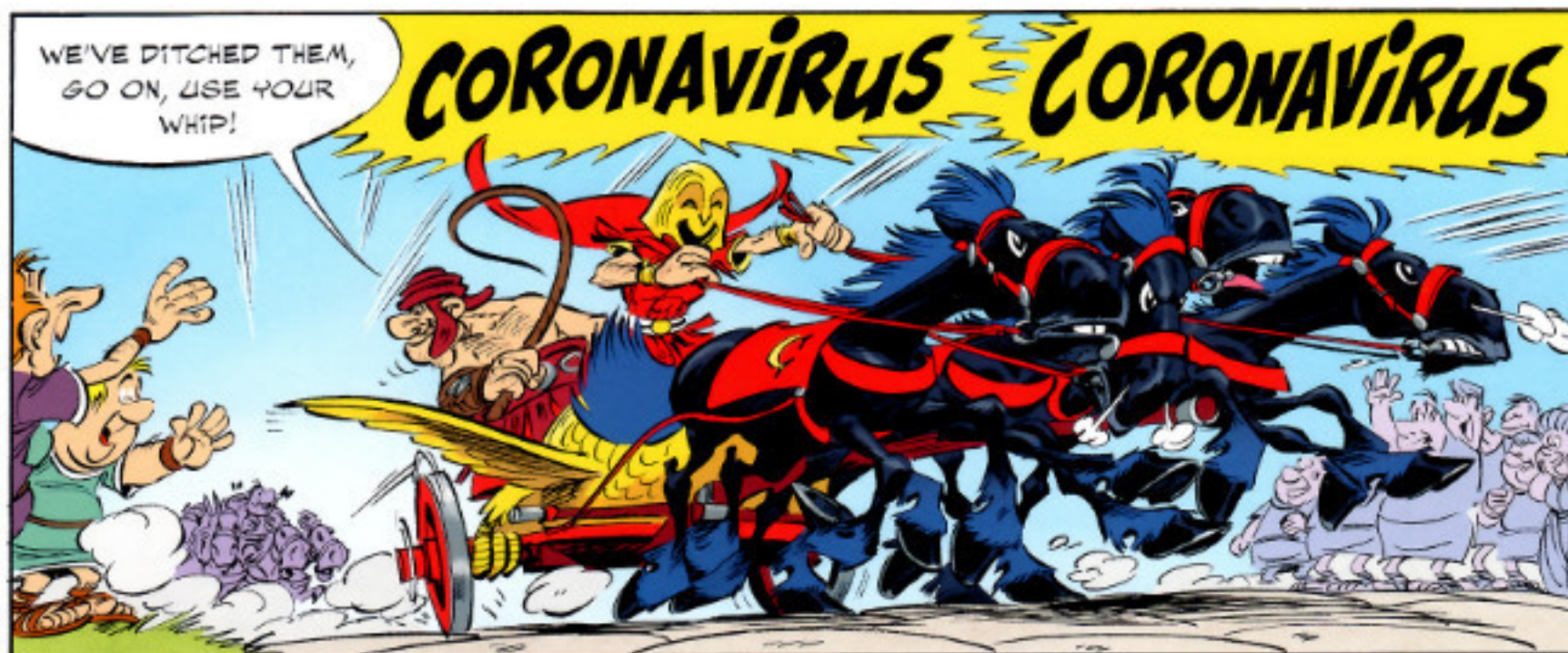
... OR ITS  
 EQUIVALENT IN  
 SESTERCES!!!

HEHE! WE'RE HERE  
 FOR THE EQUIVALENT,  
 MY BOY!

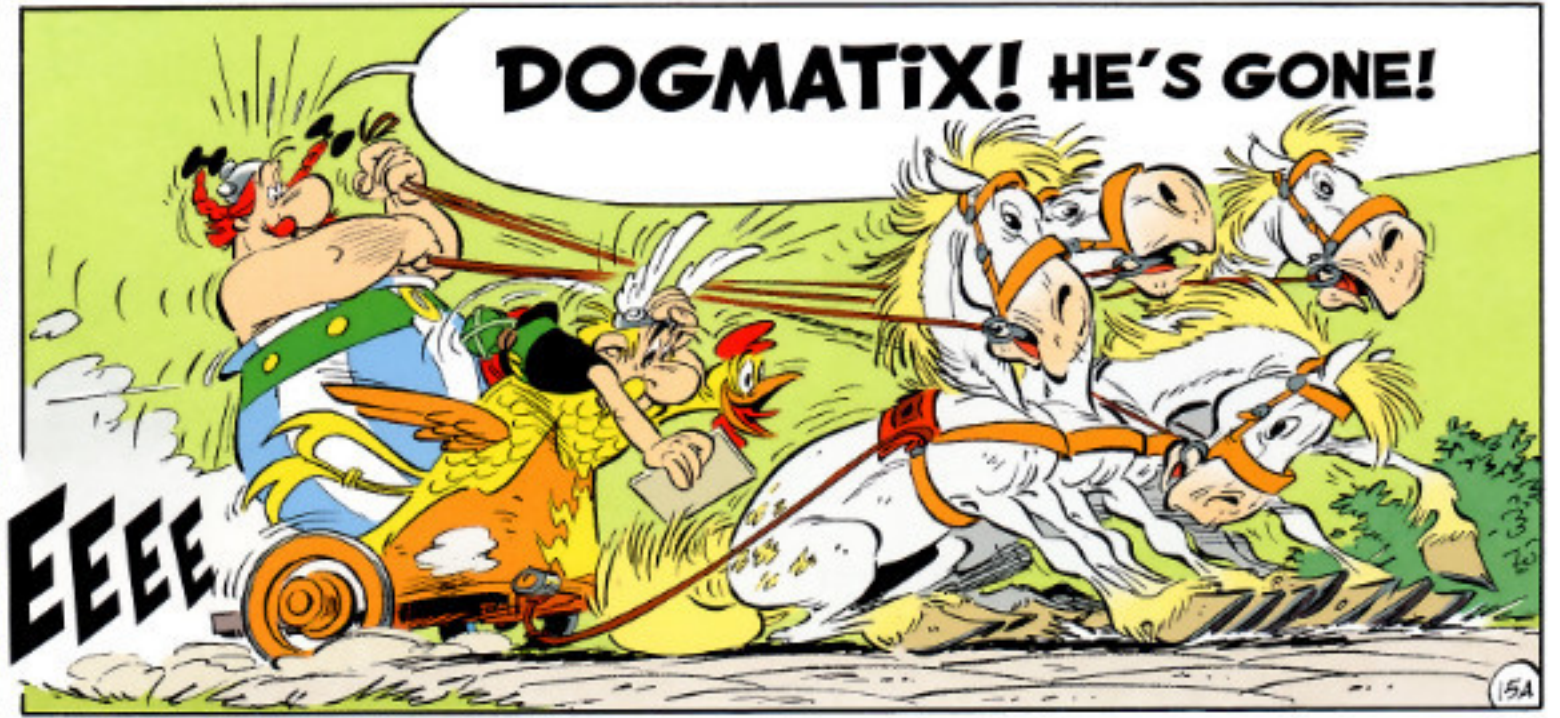
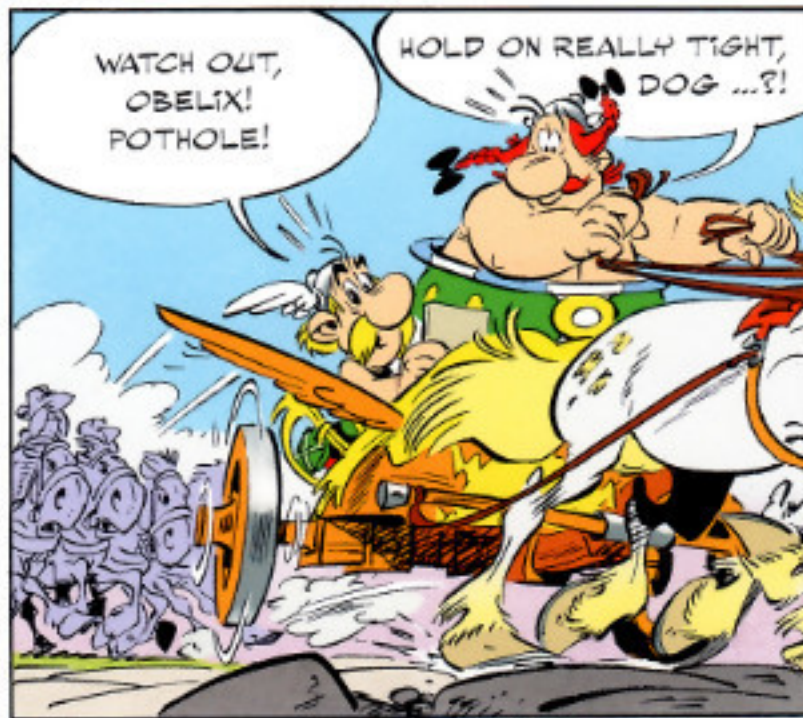
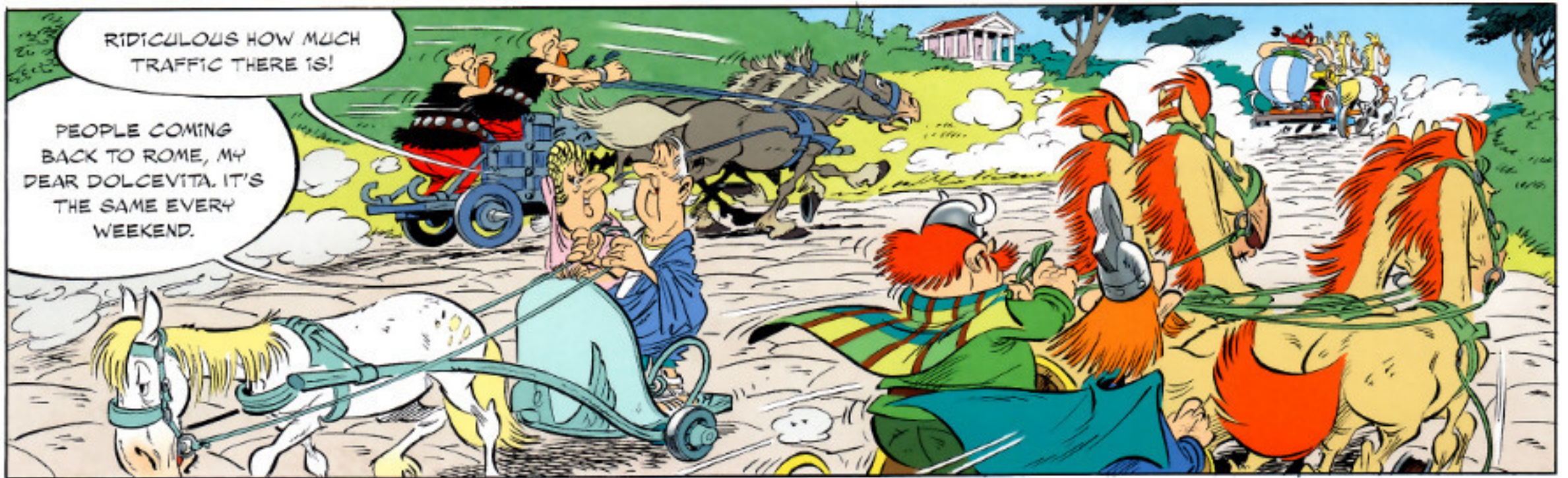




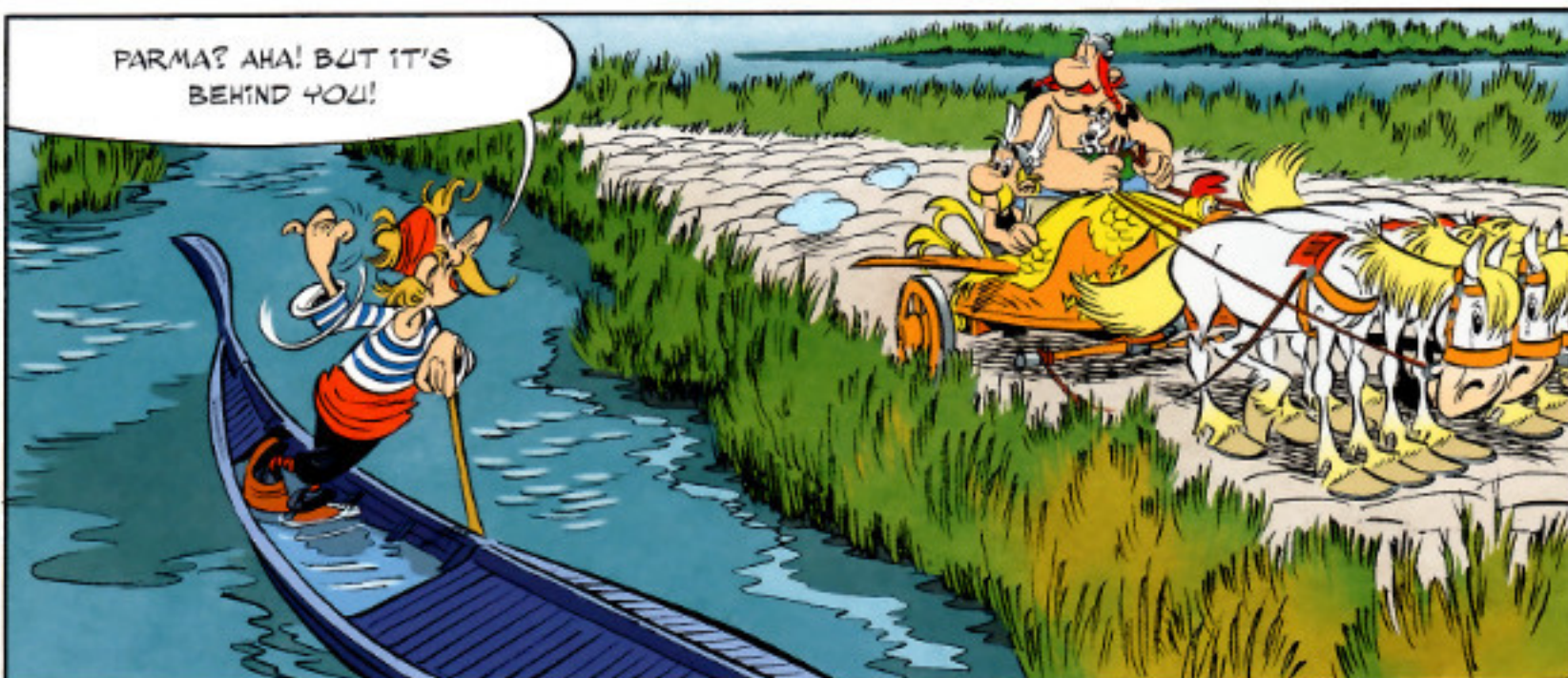
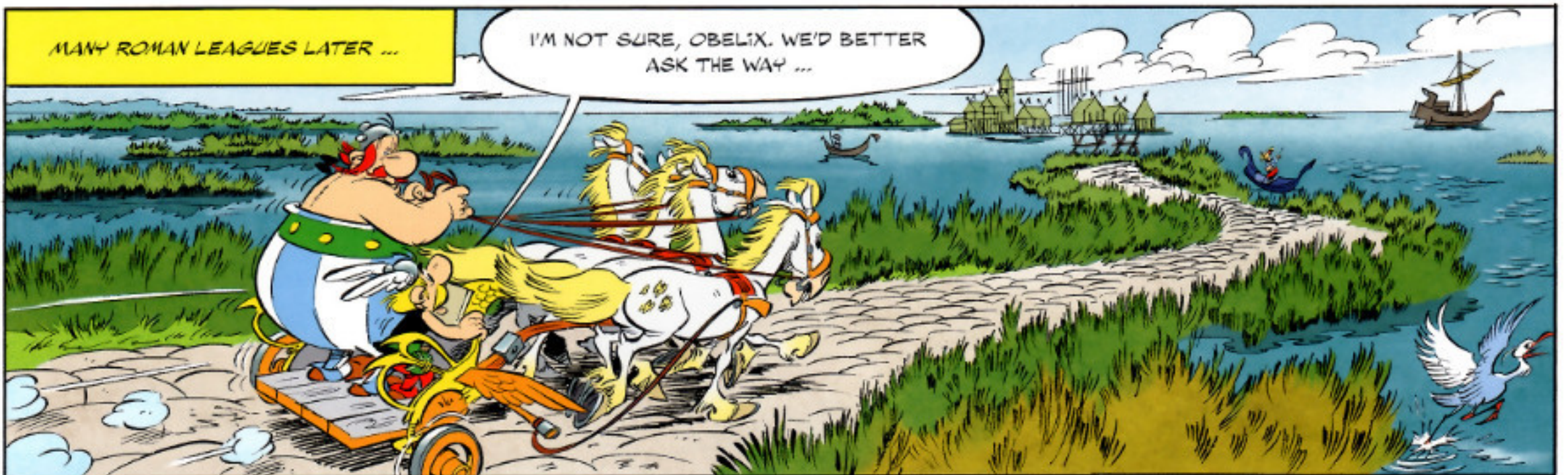
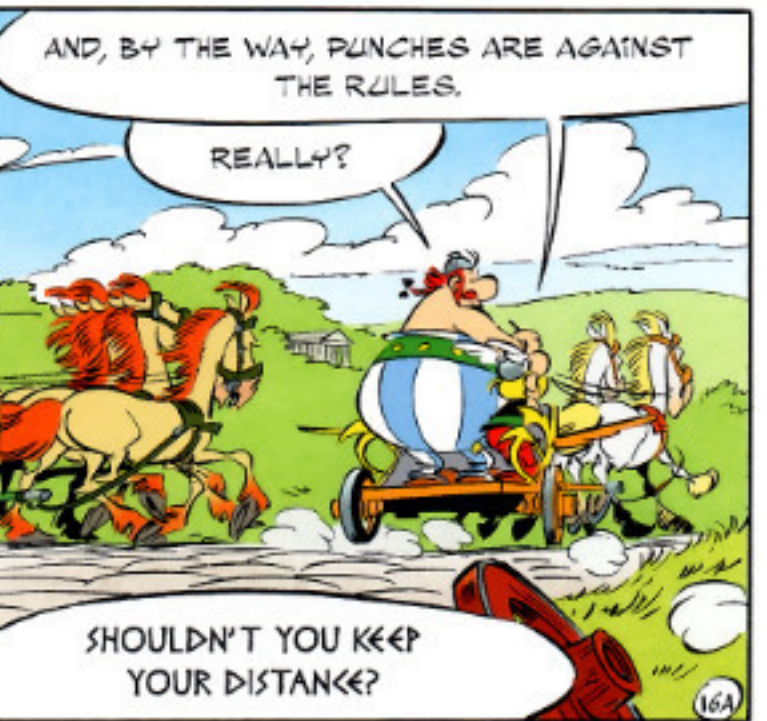
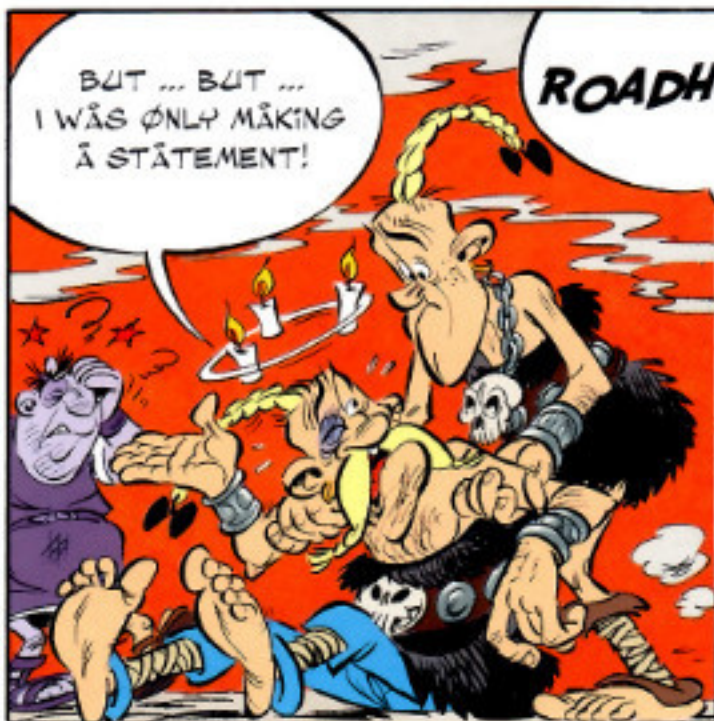
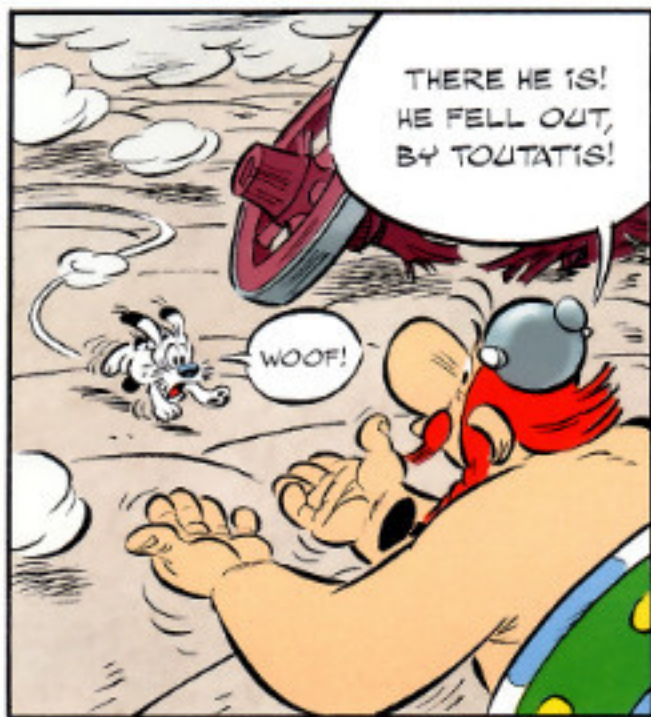




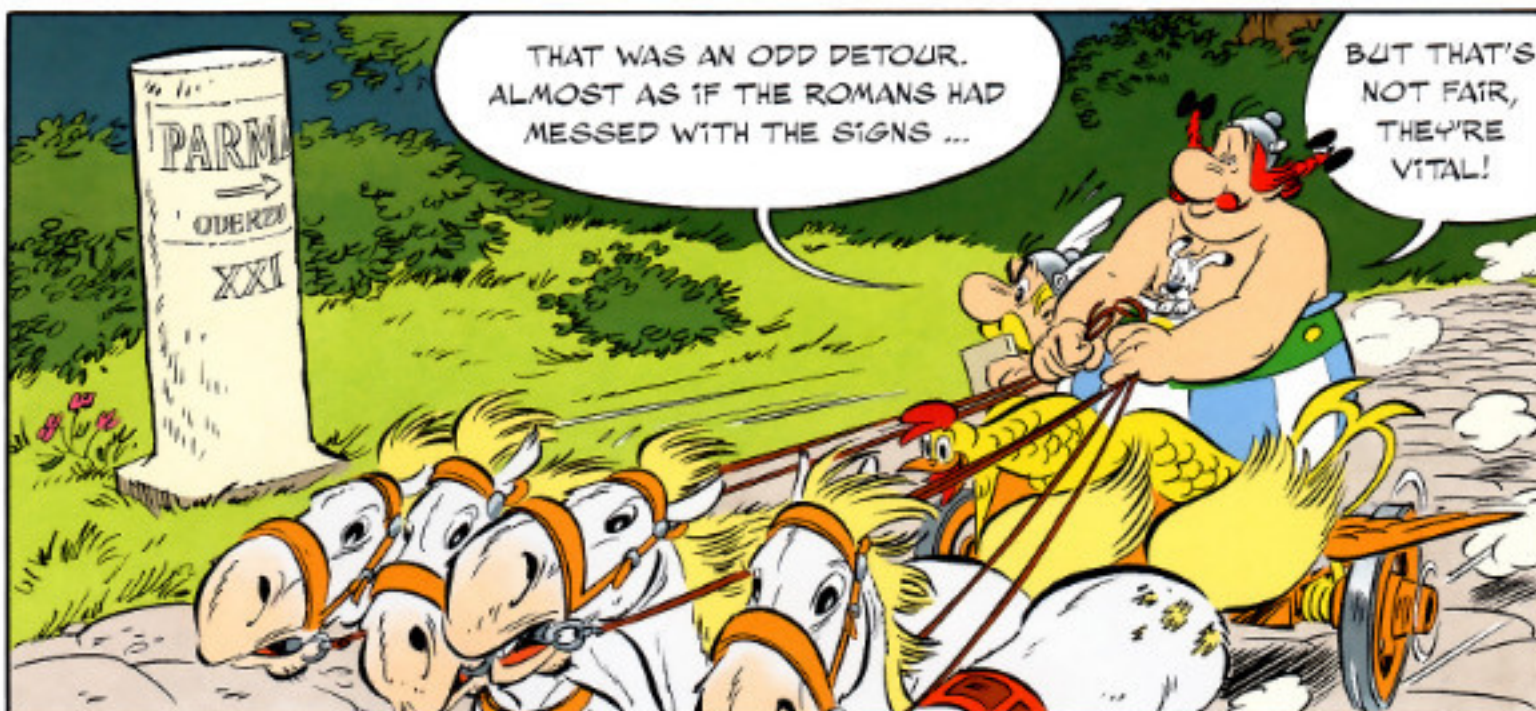
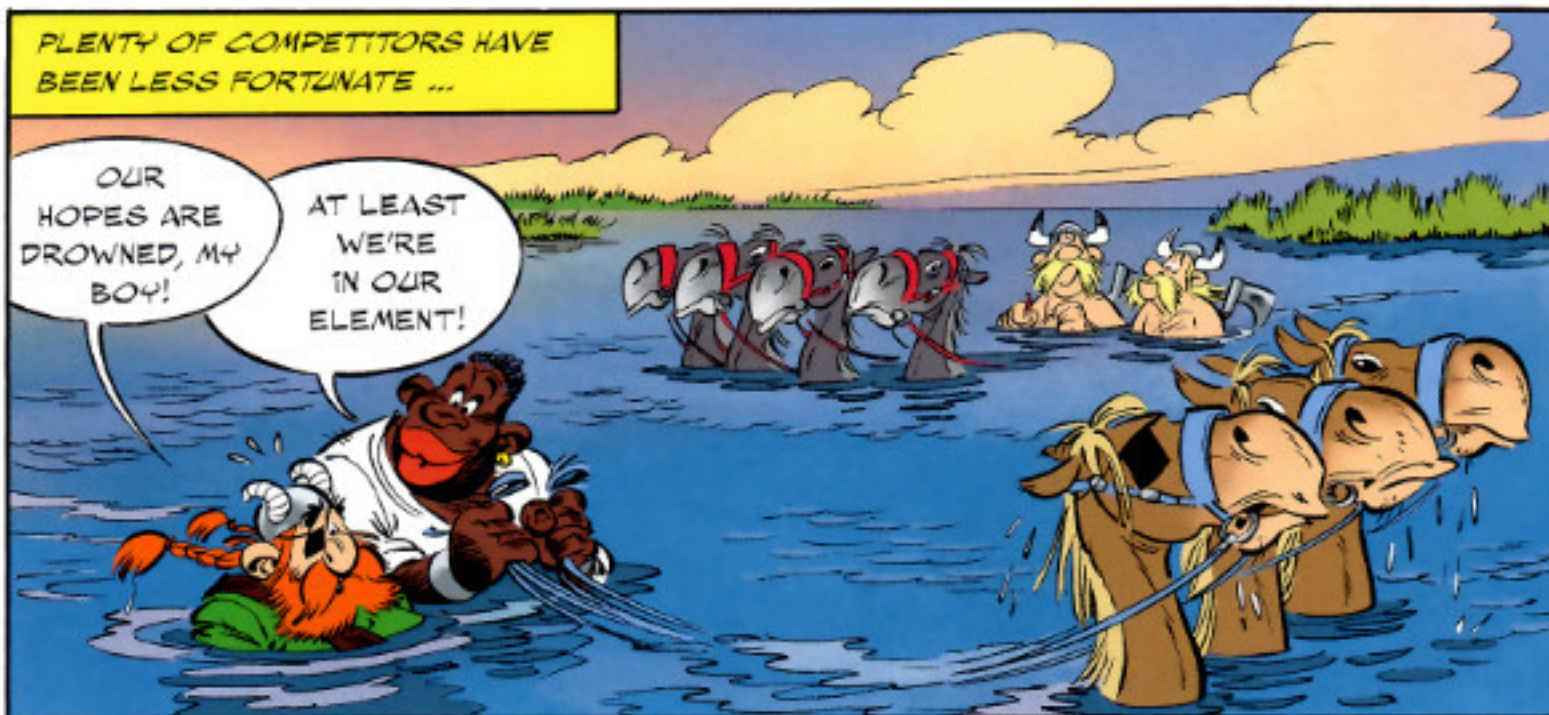
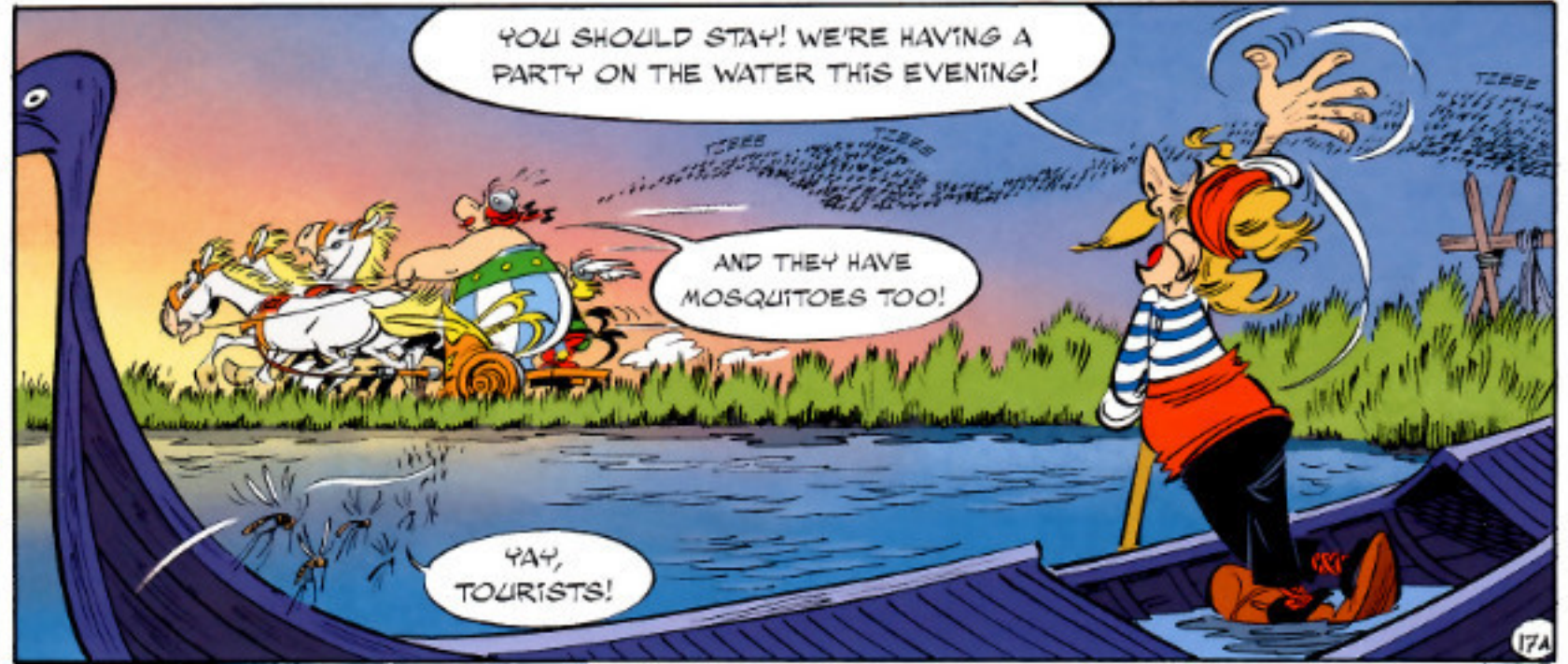




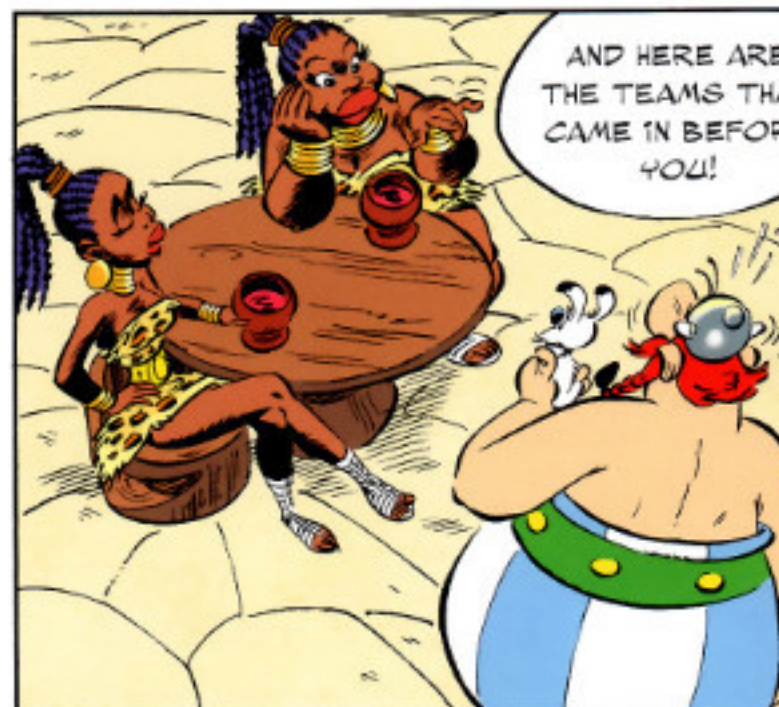
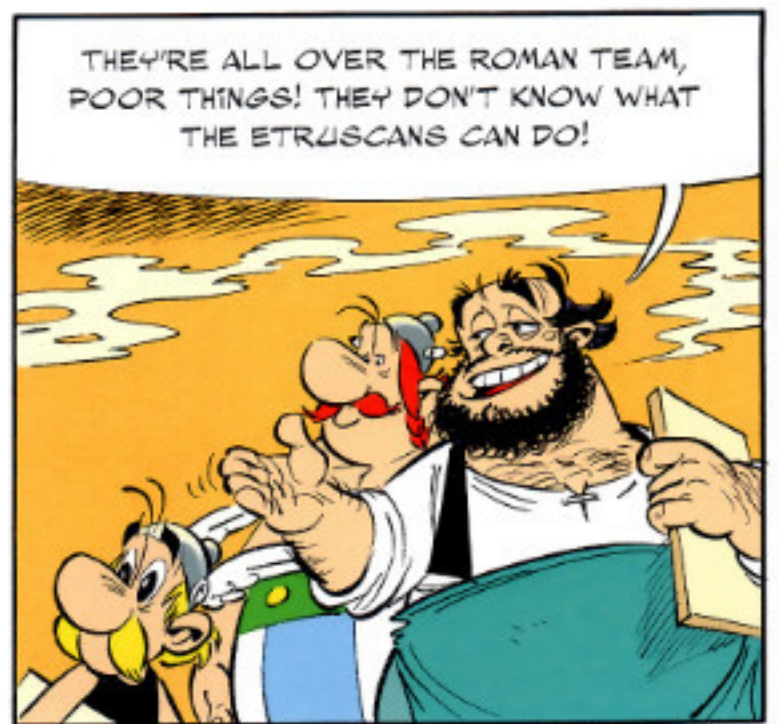
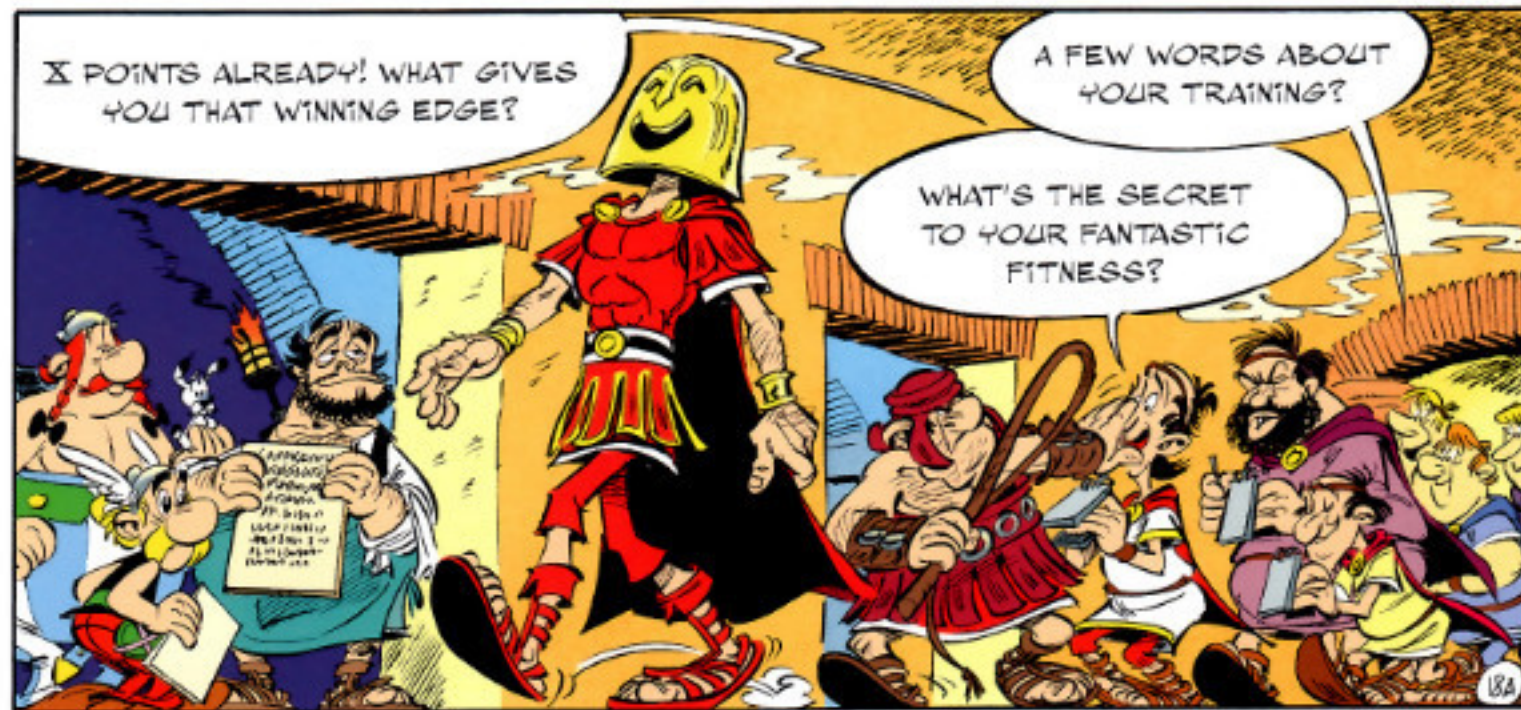




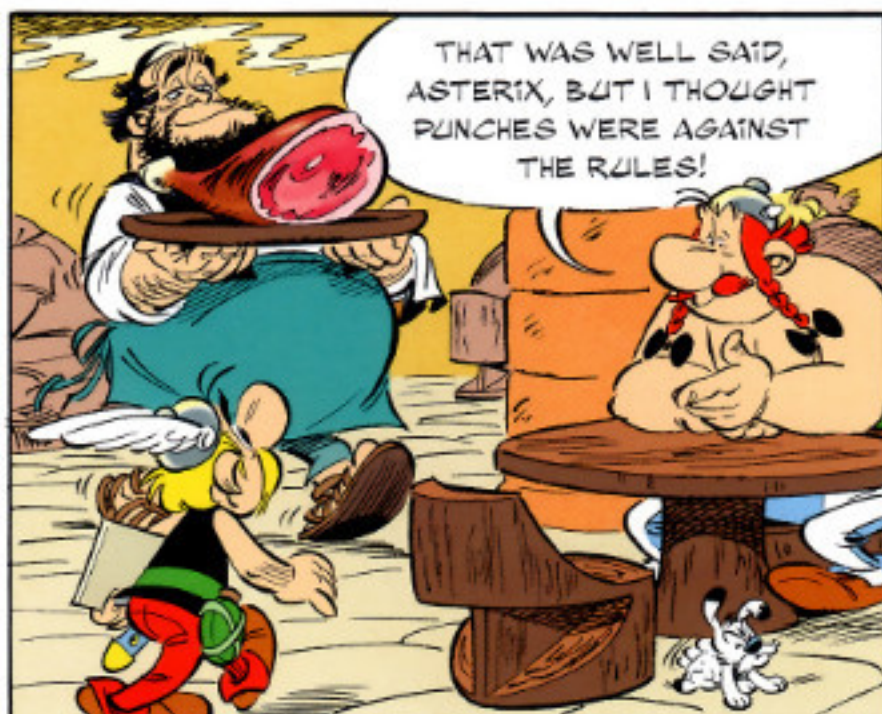
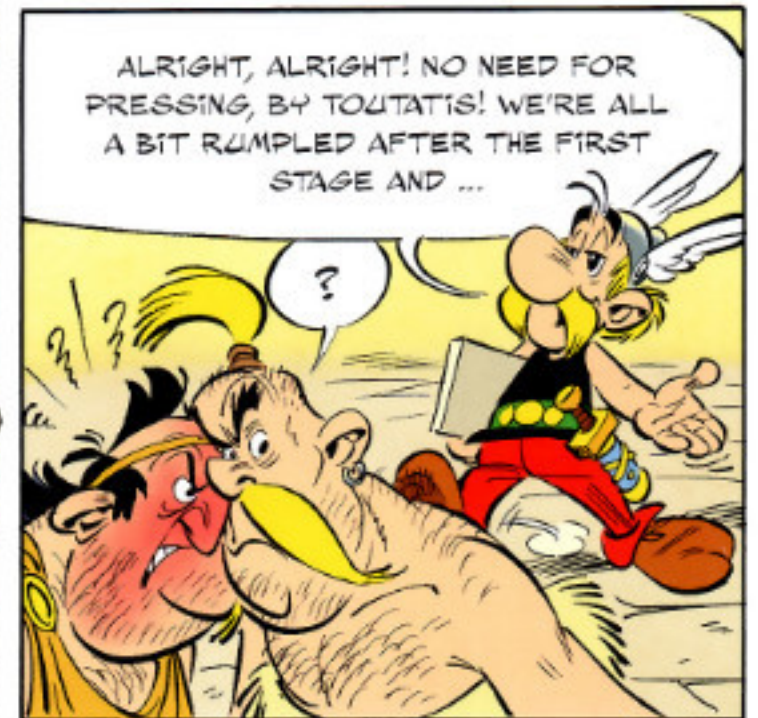




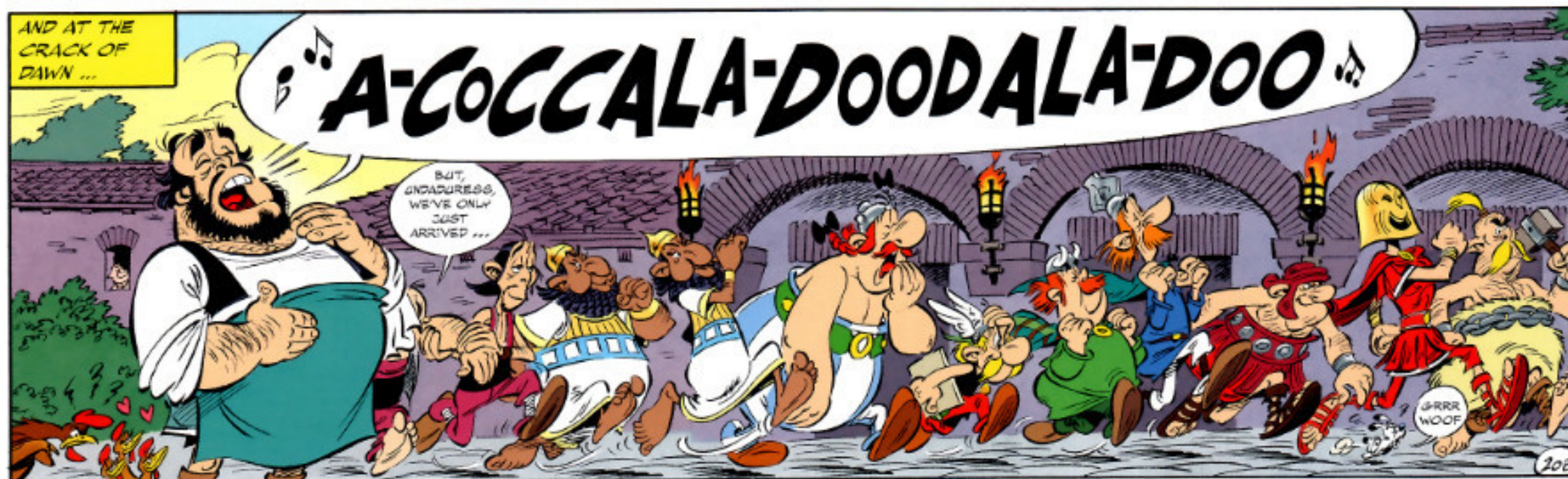
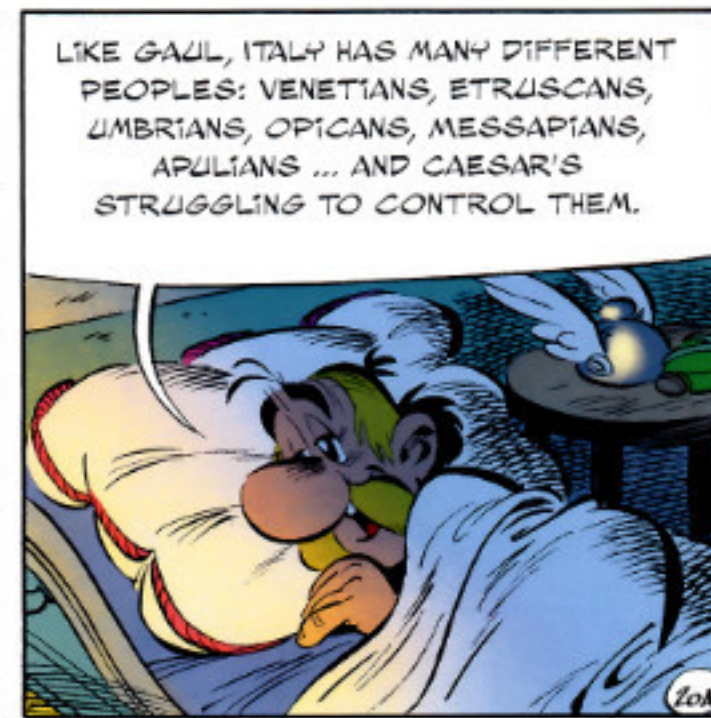
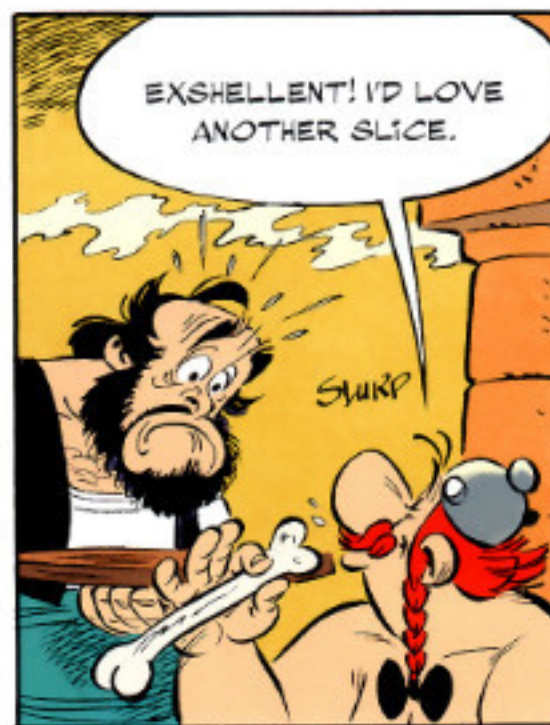




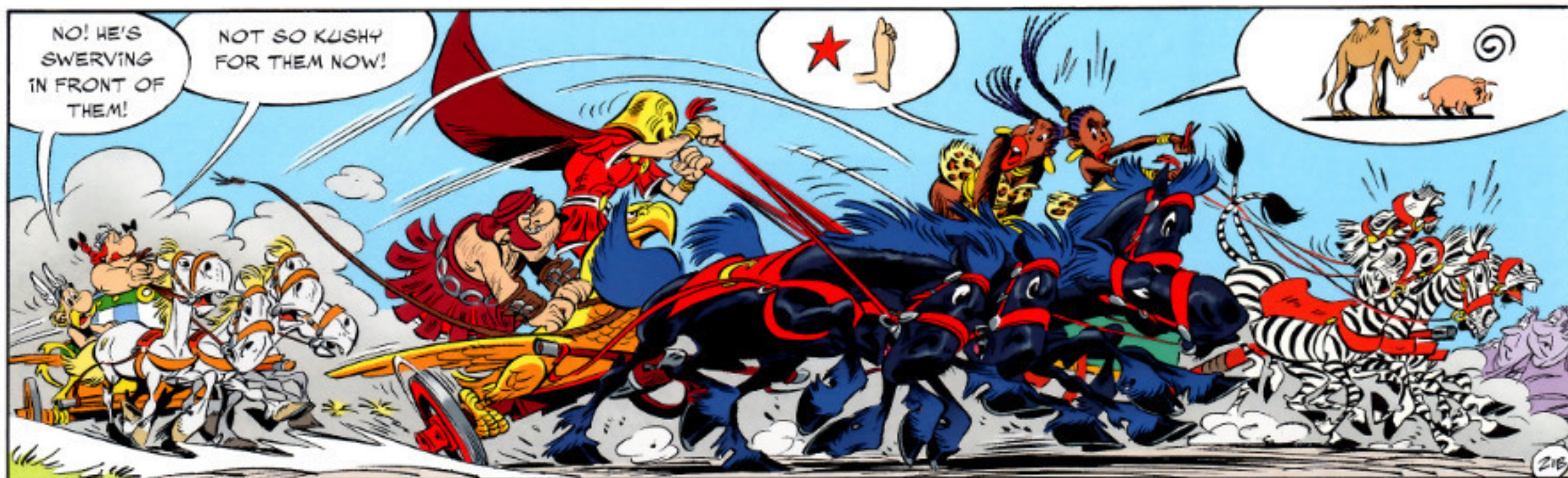
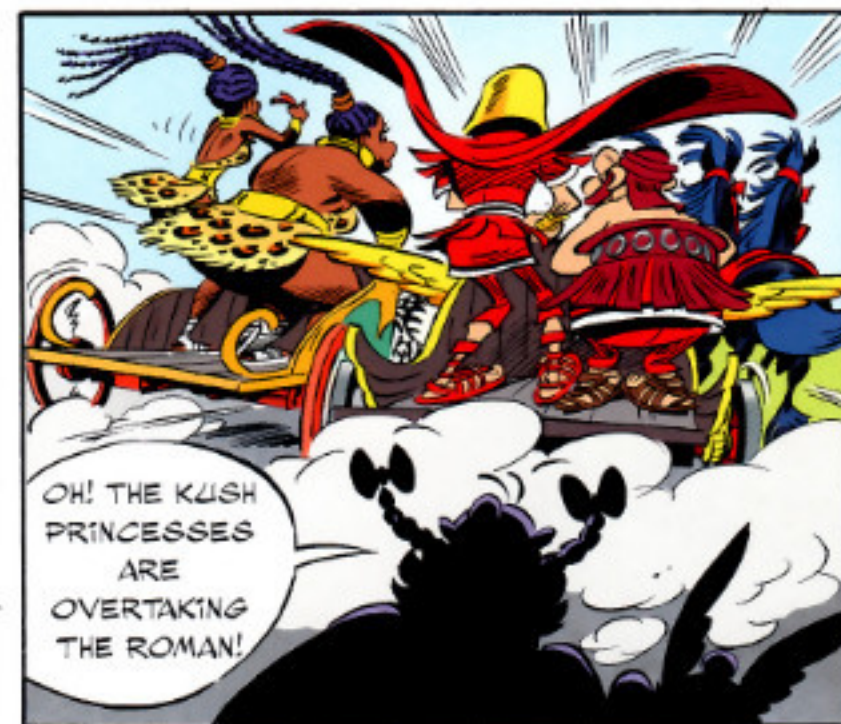
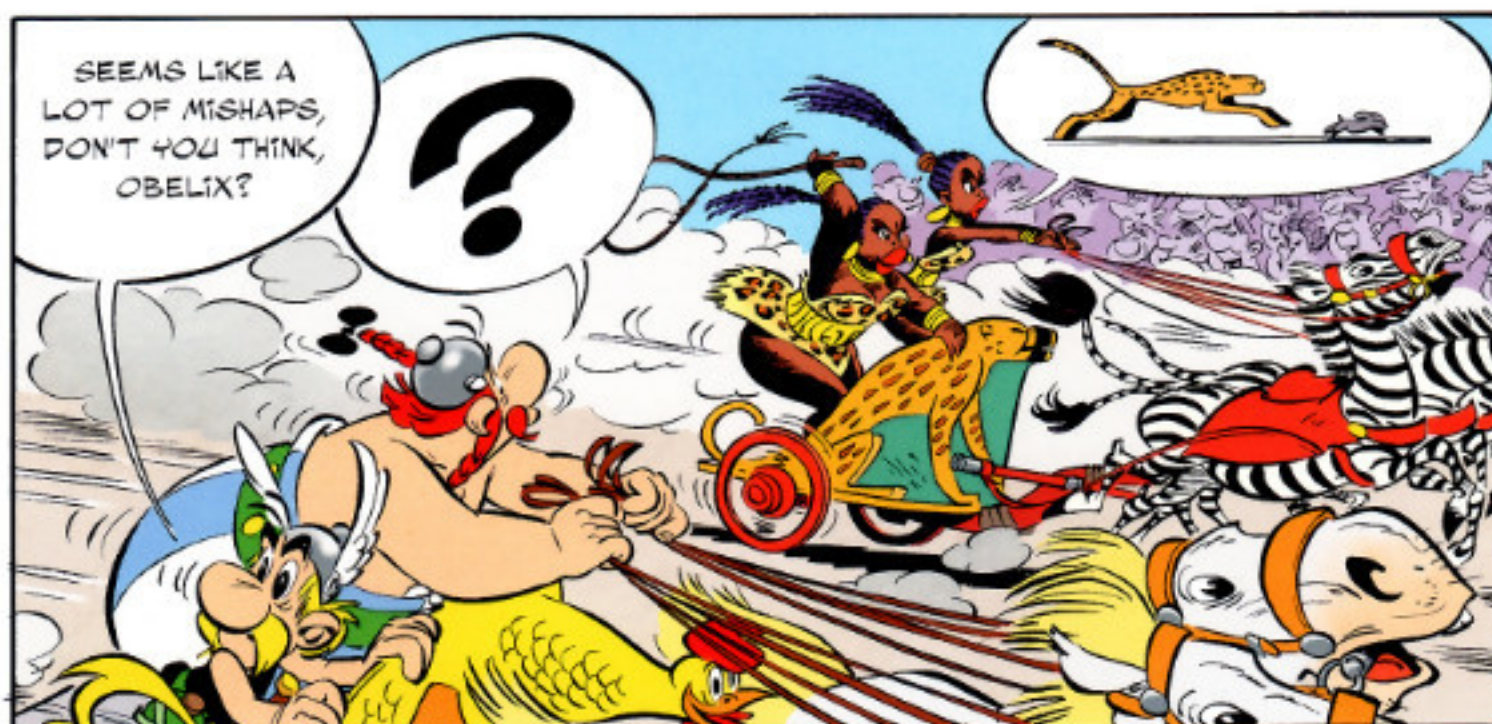
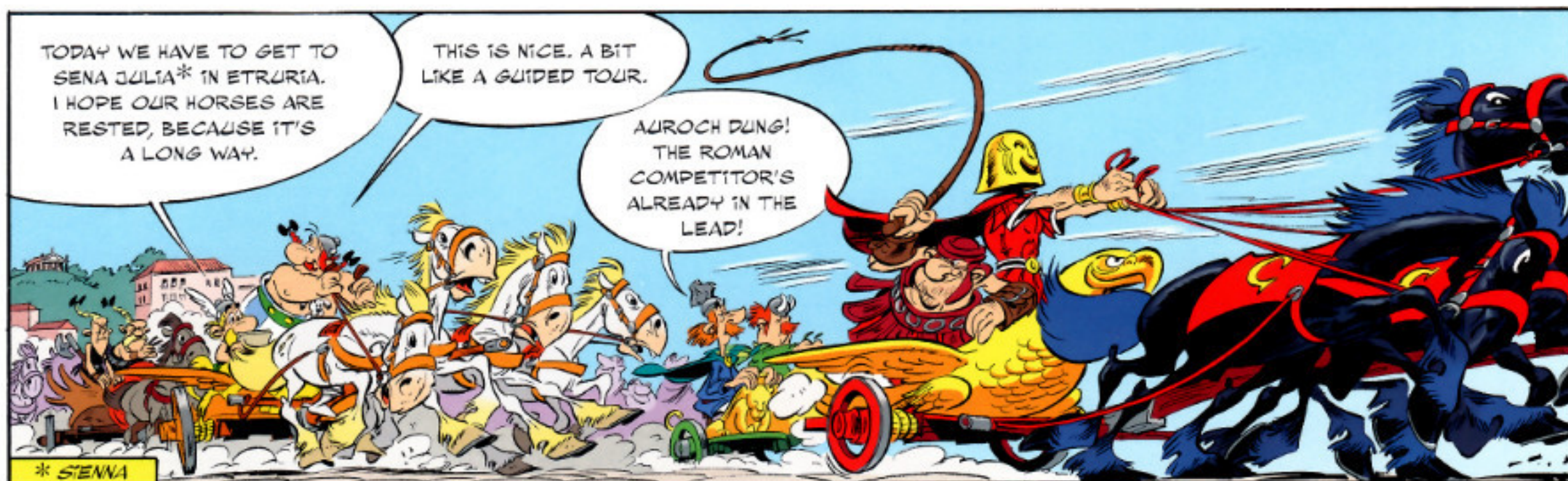




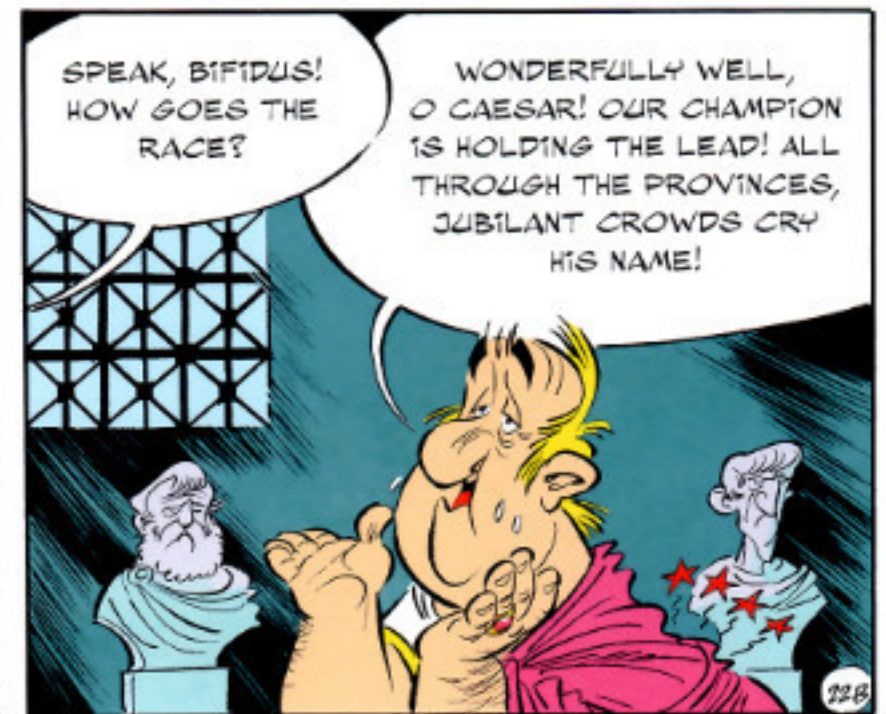
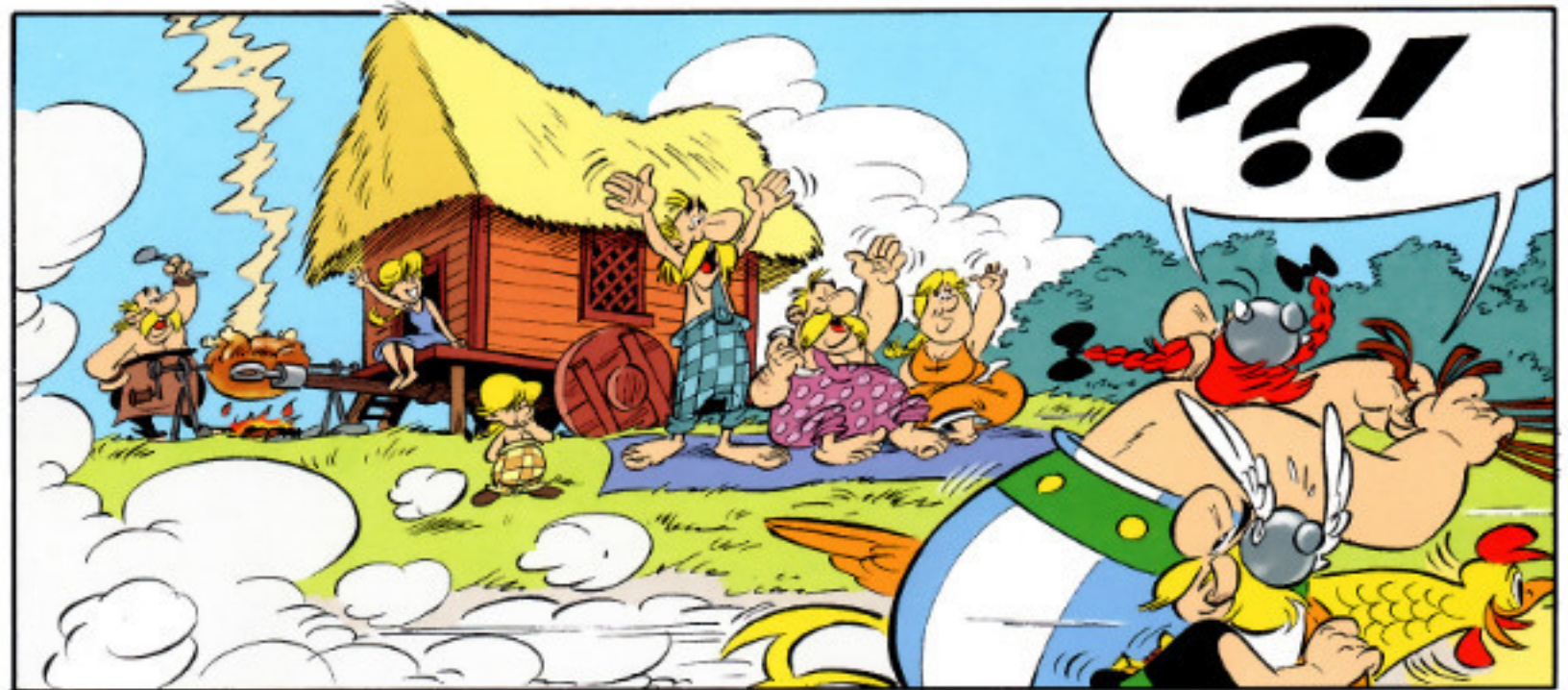
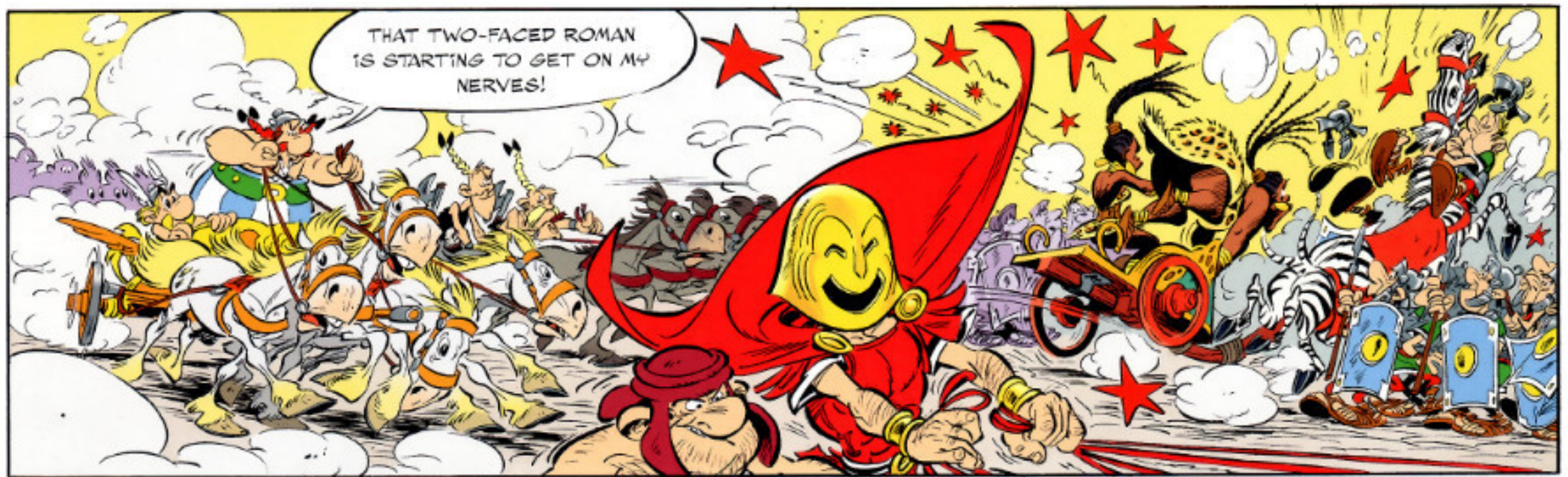




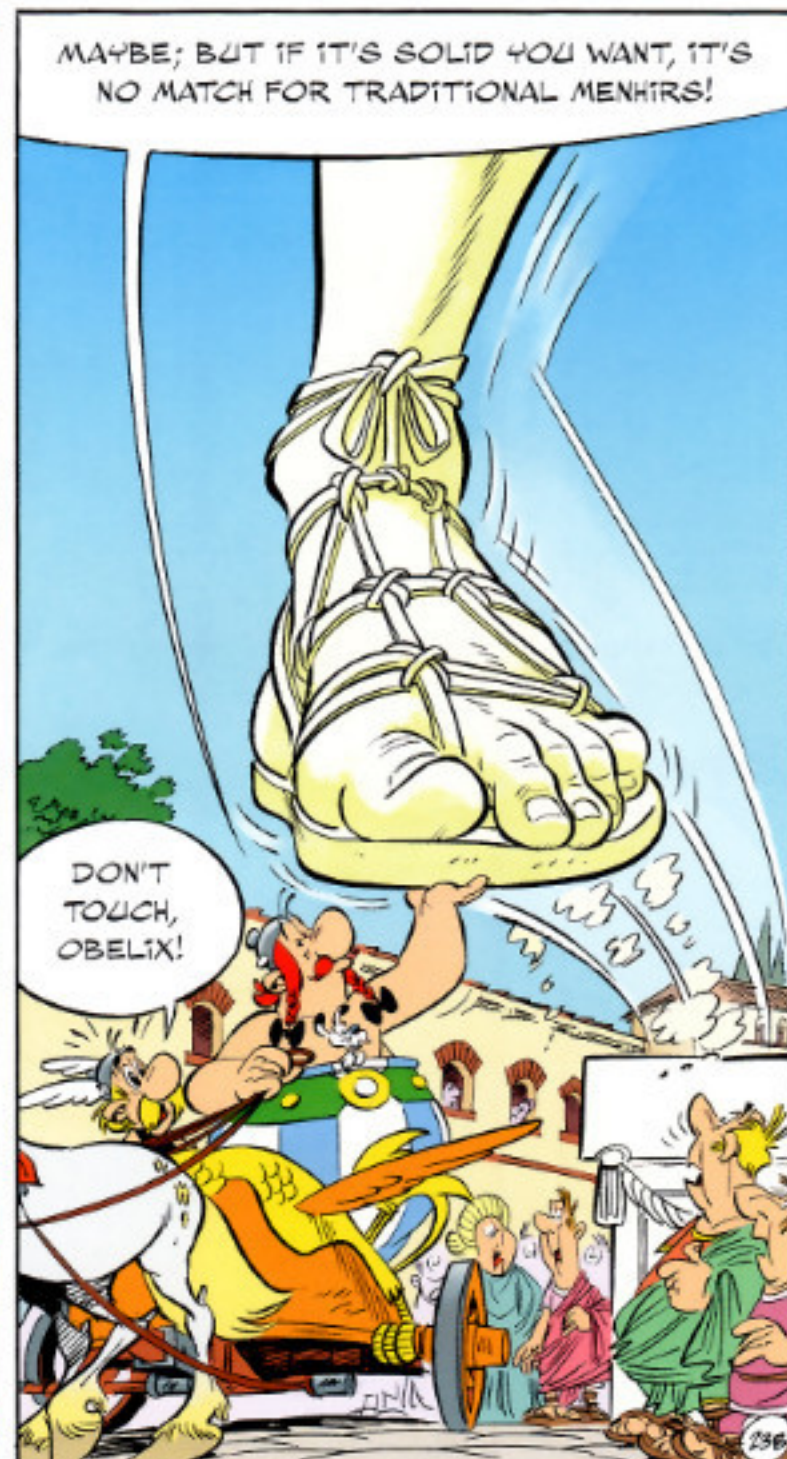
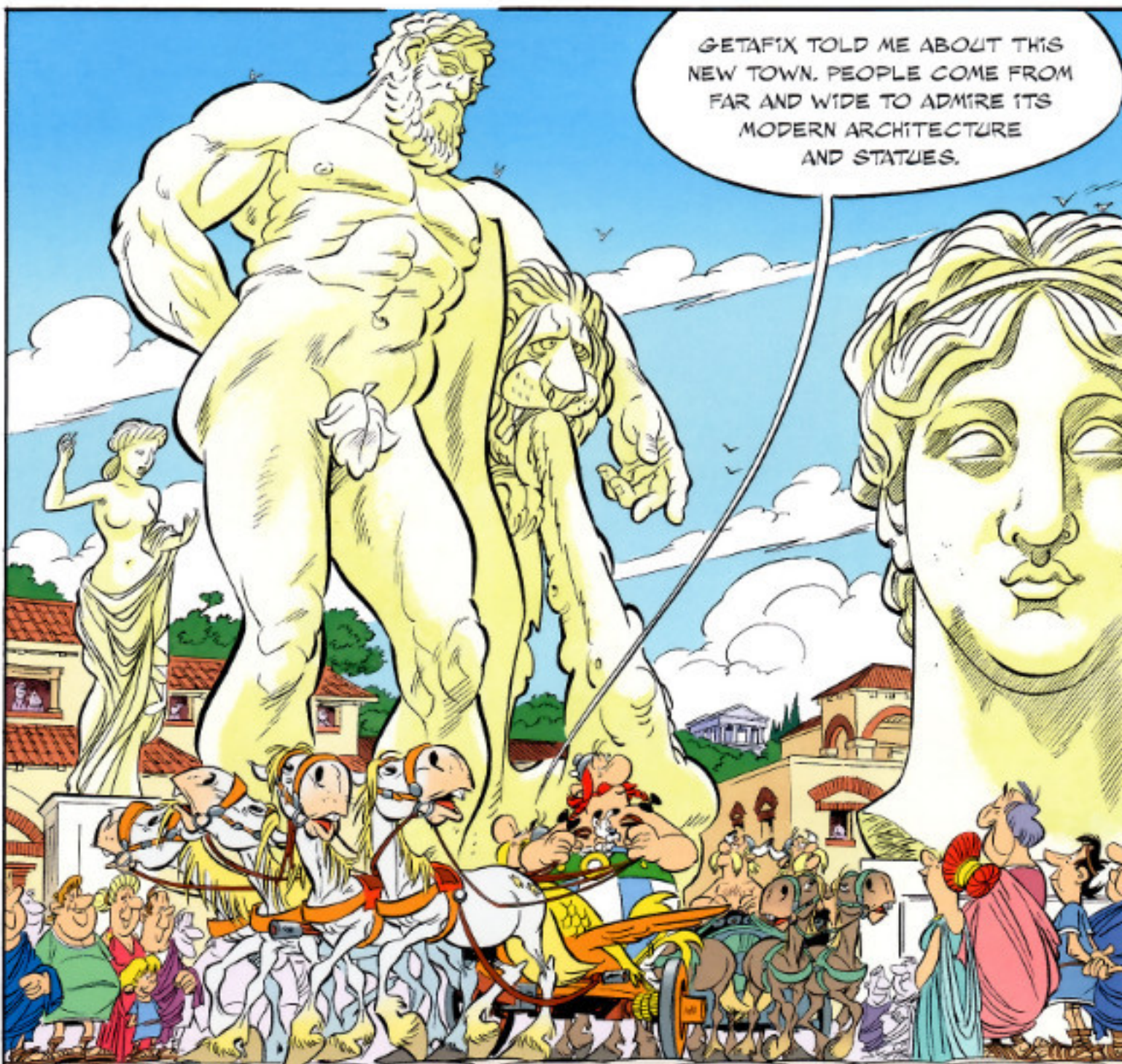
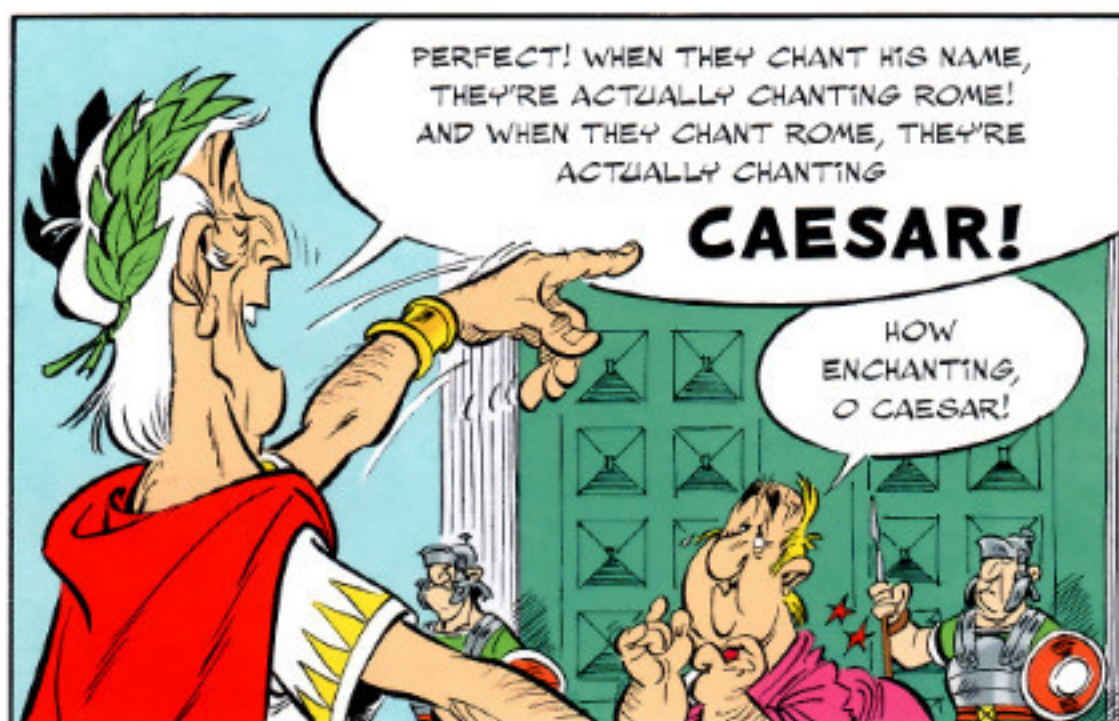




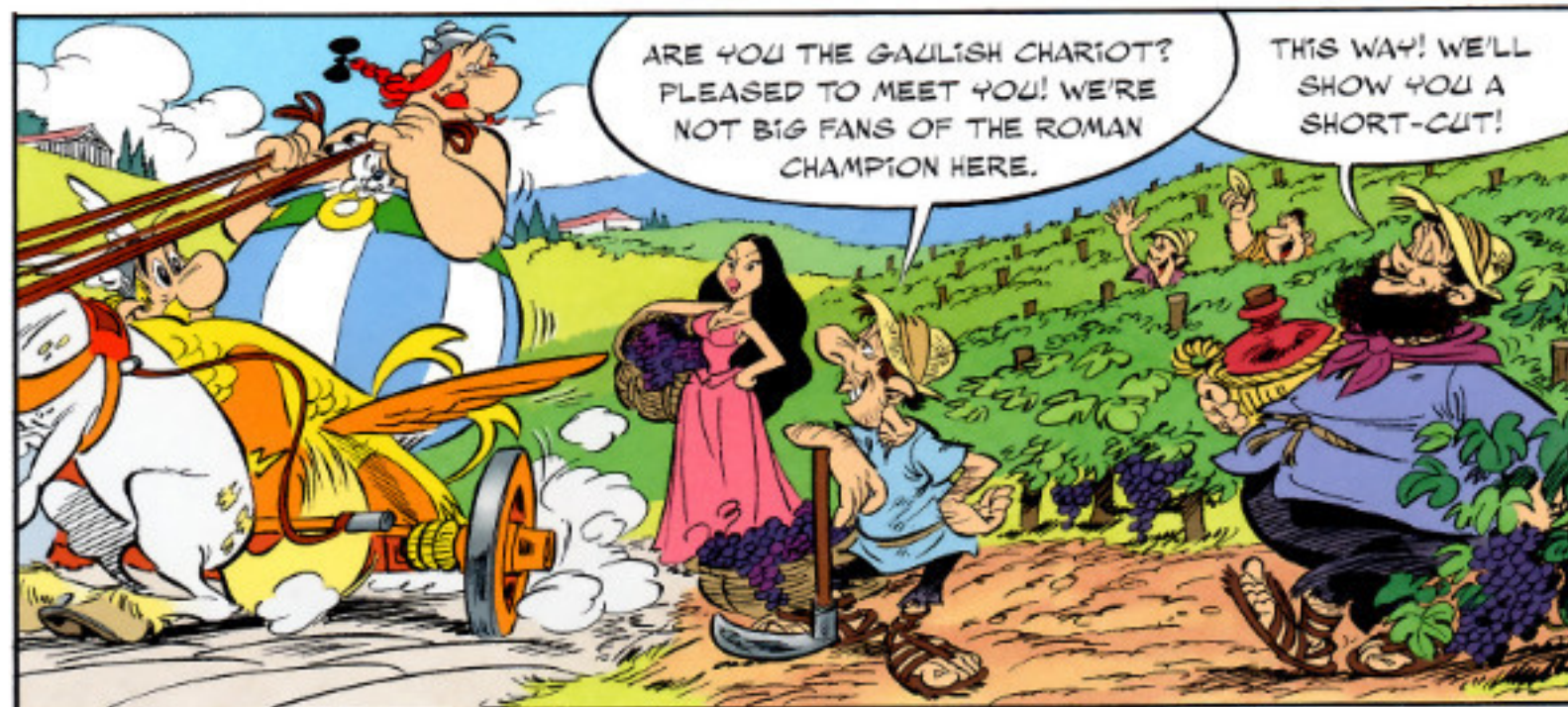
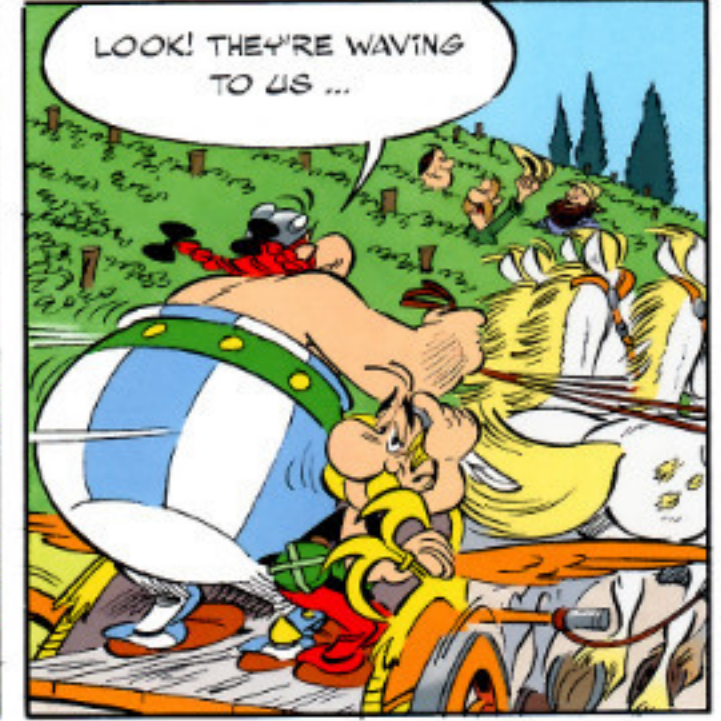
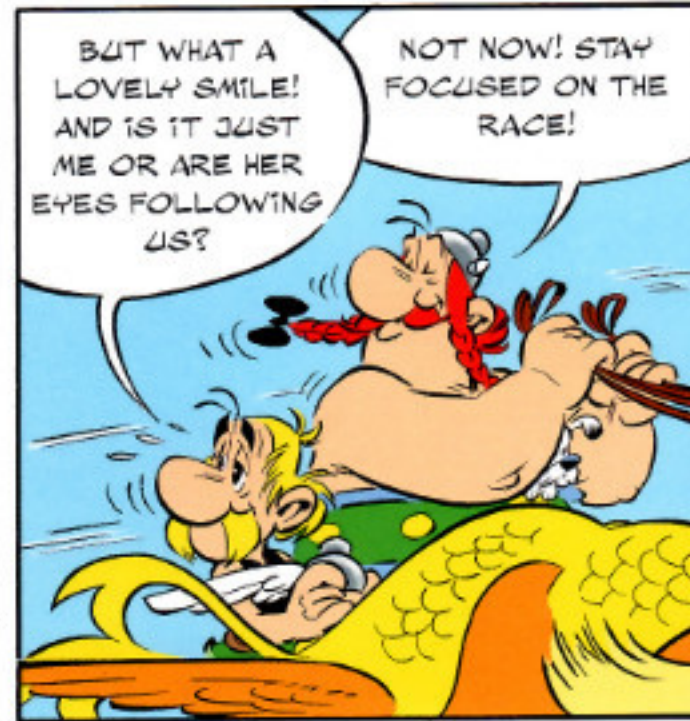
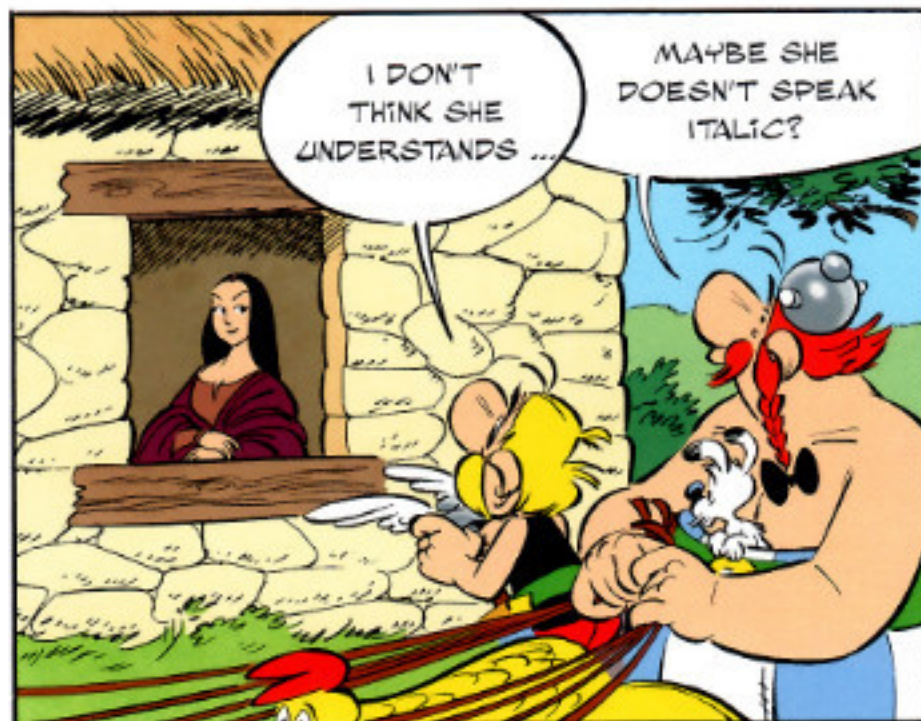
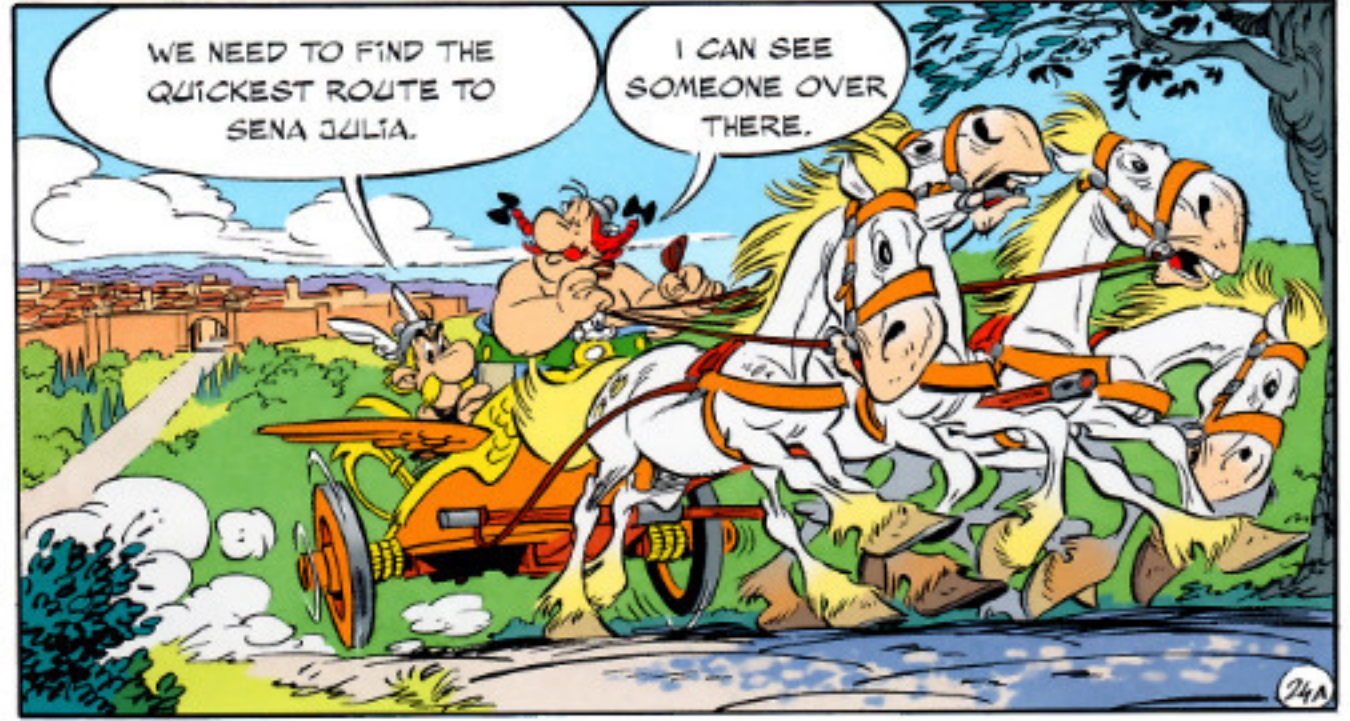
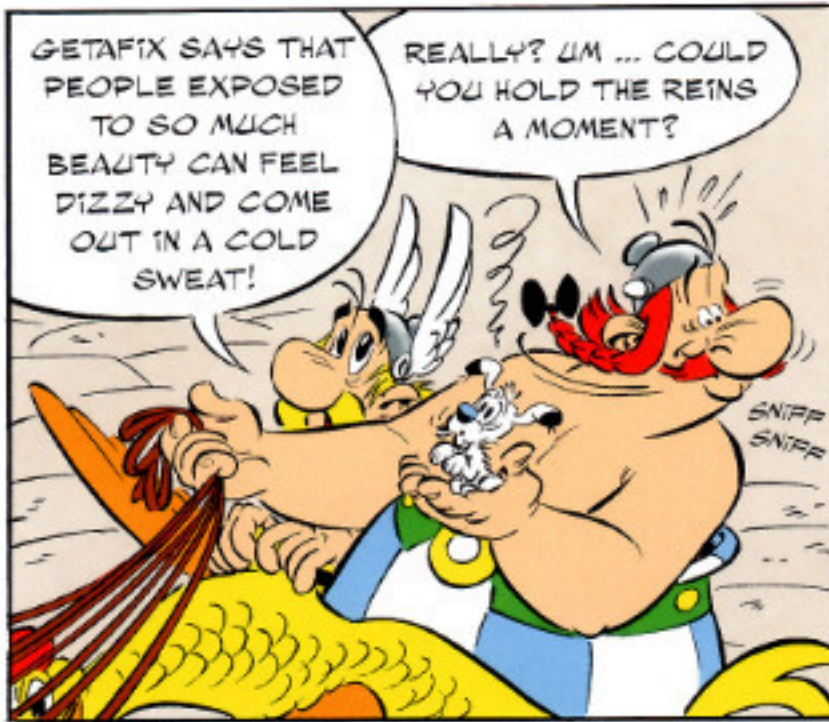




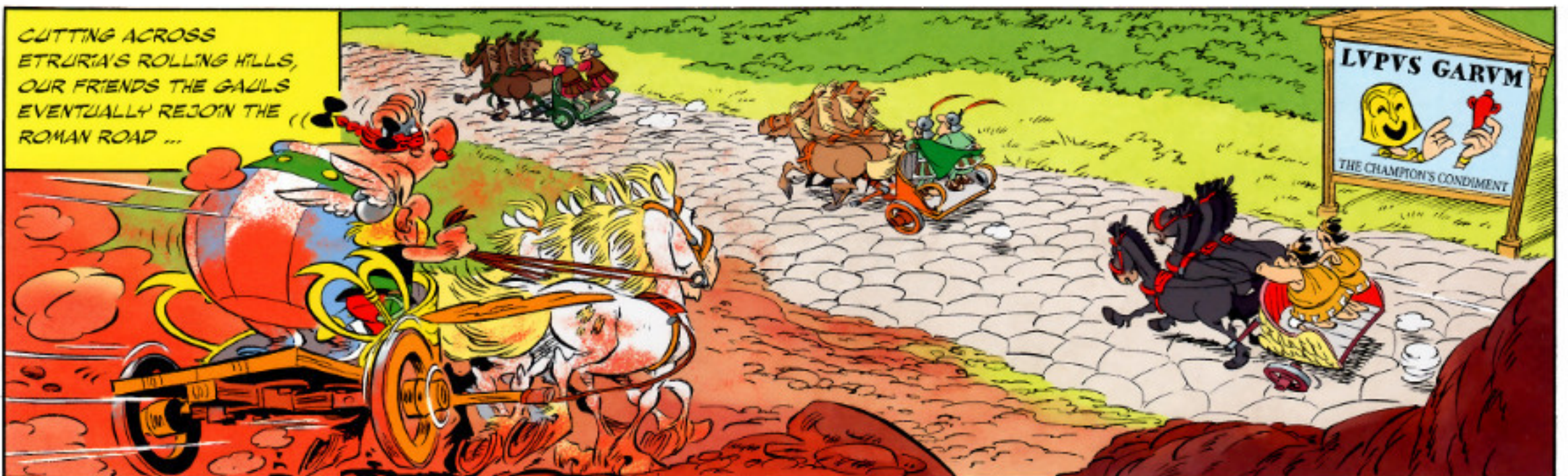
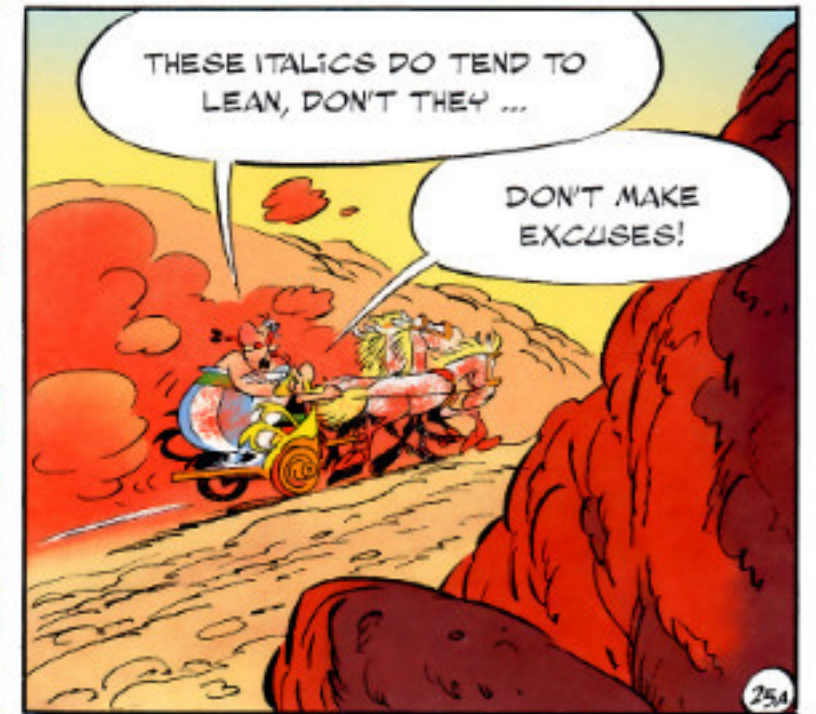
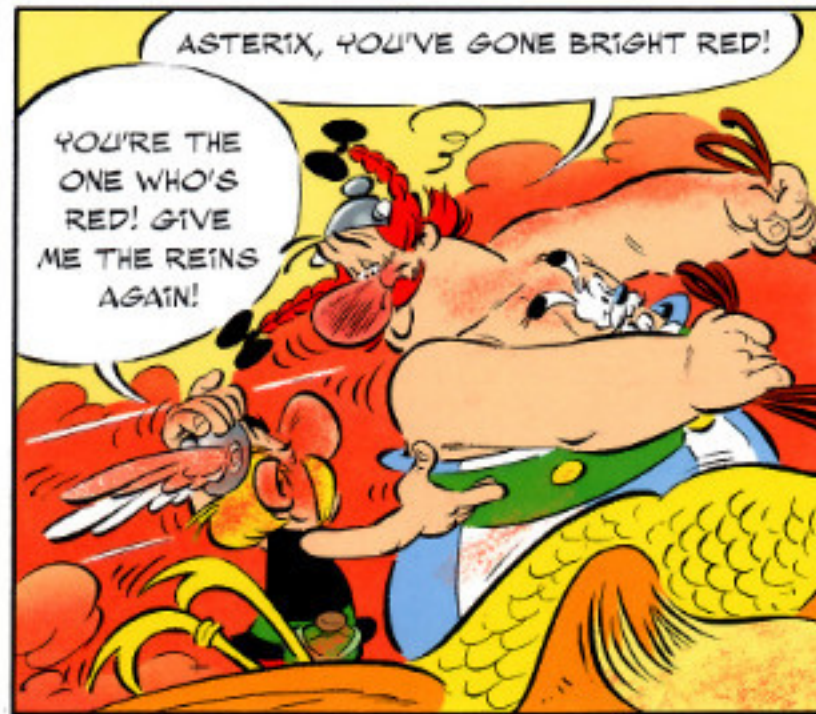
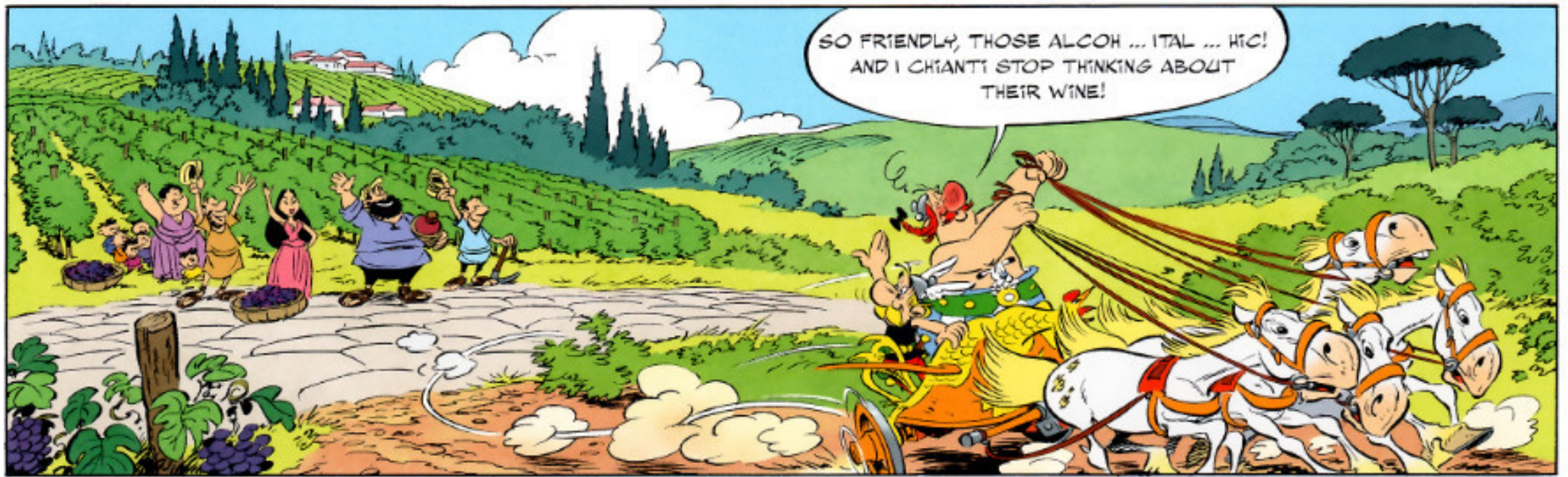




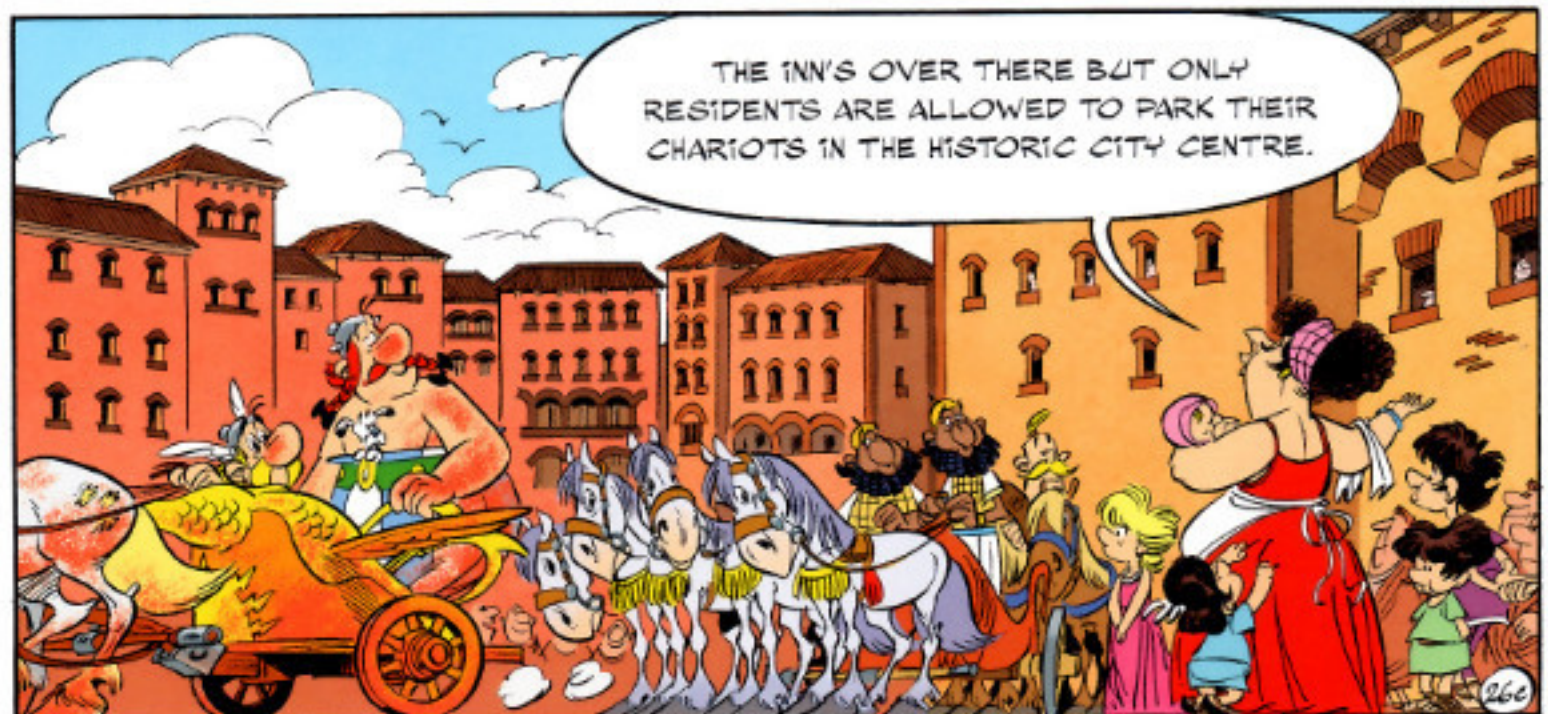
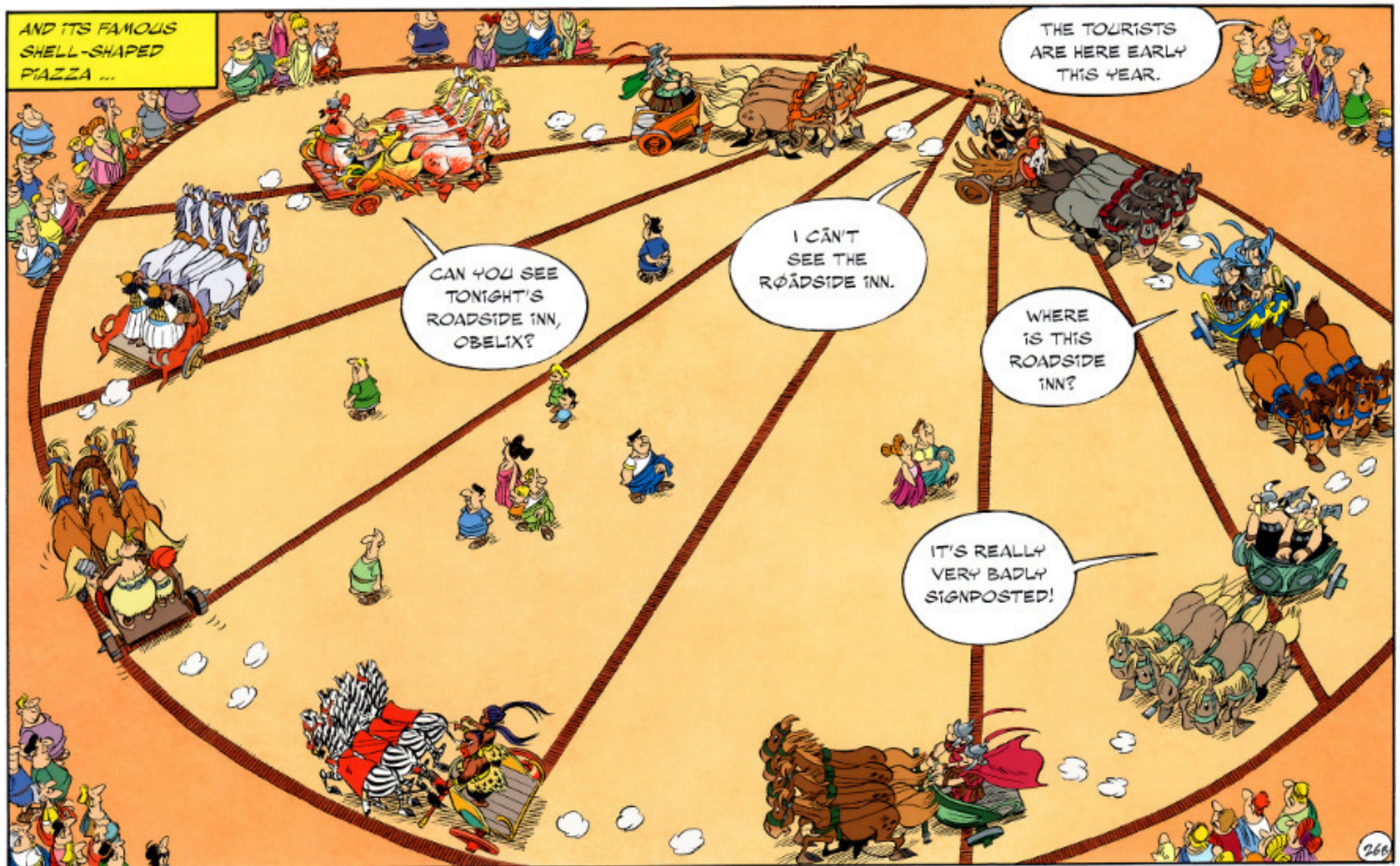




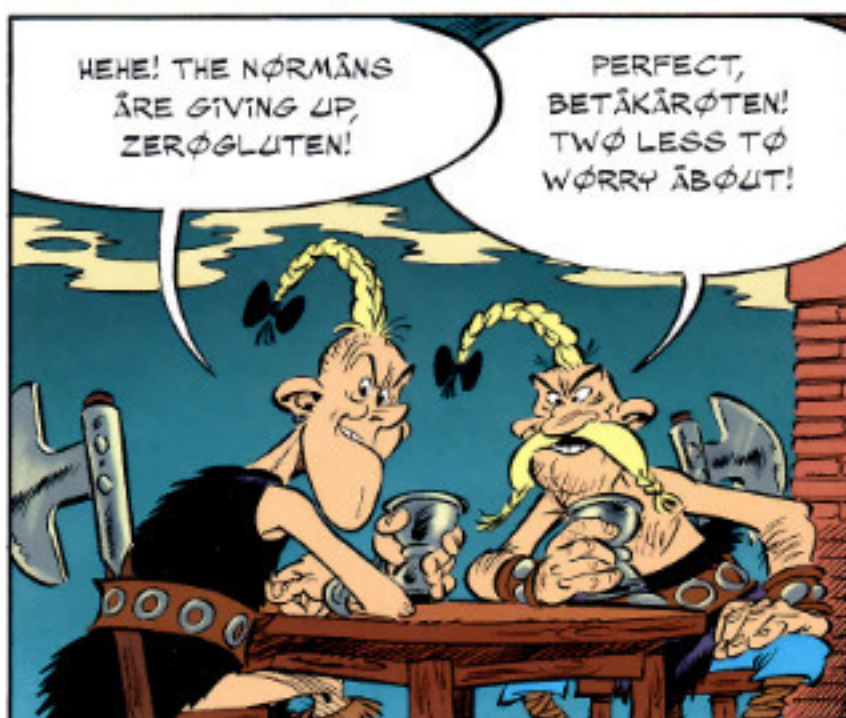
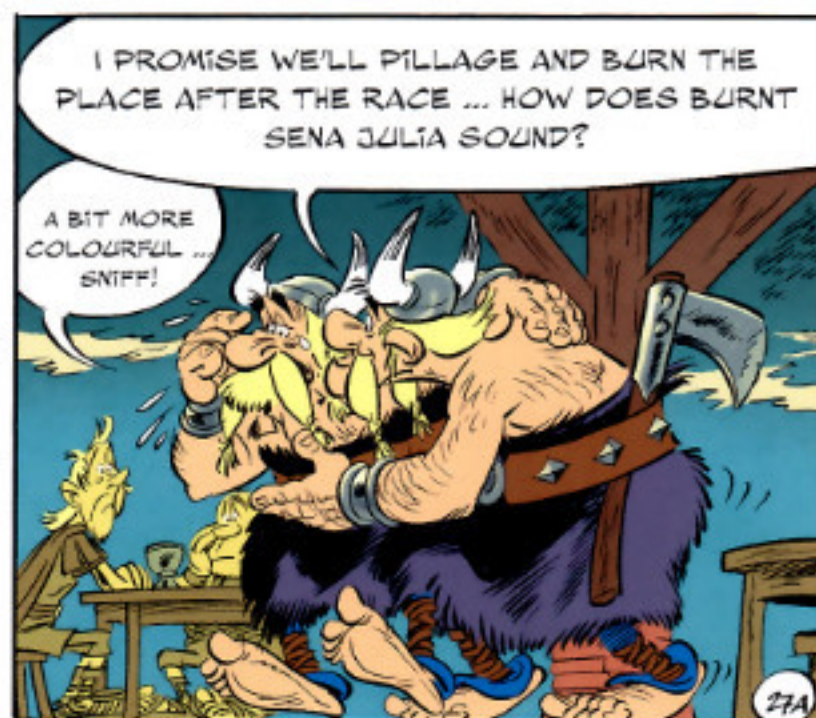
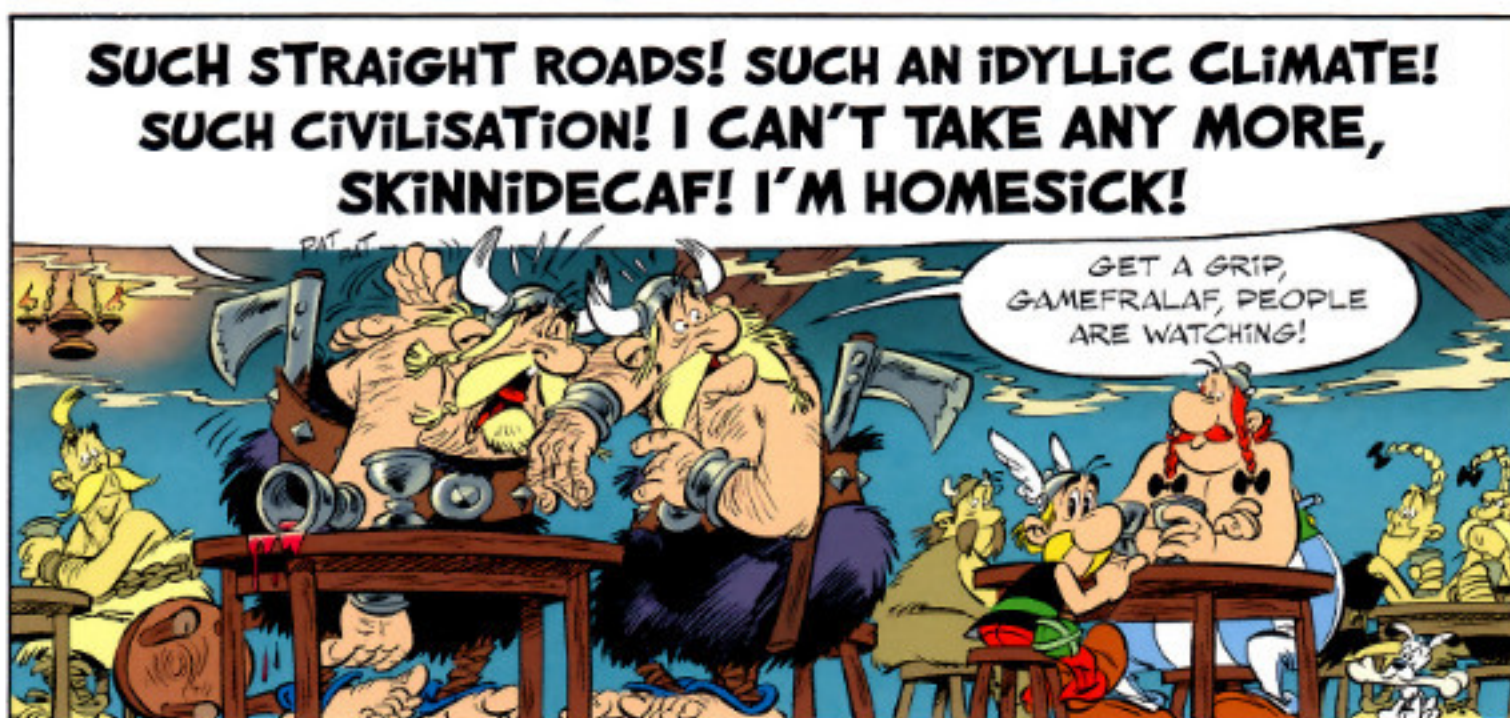
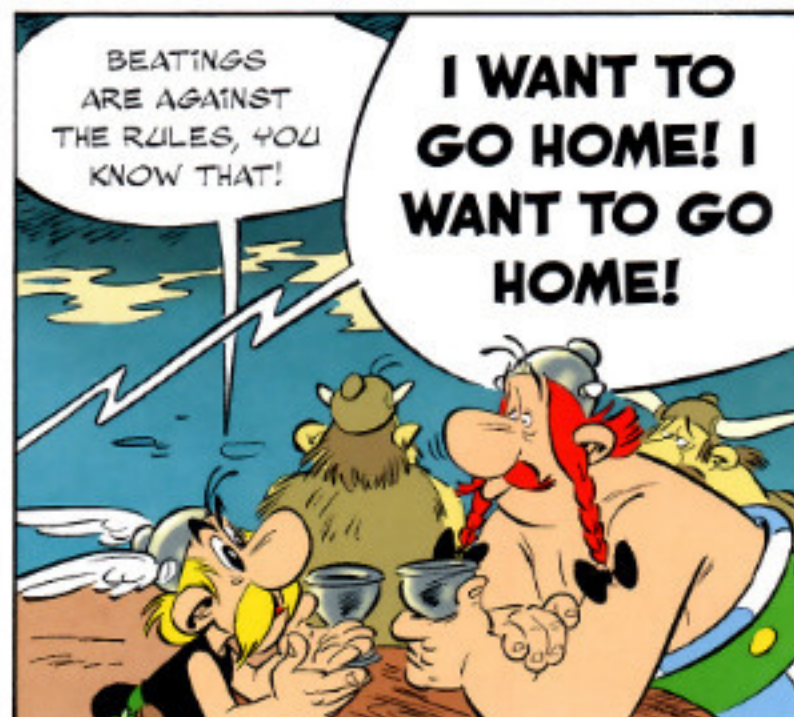






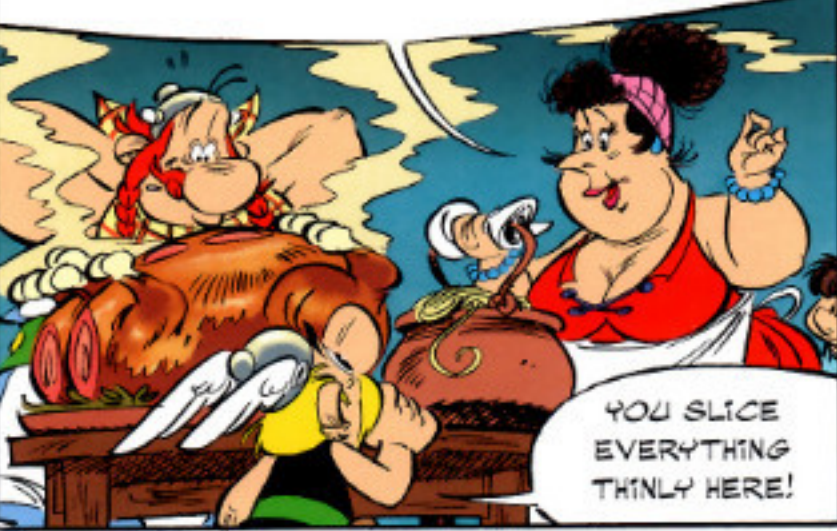






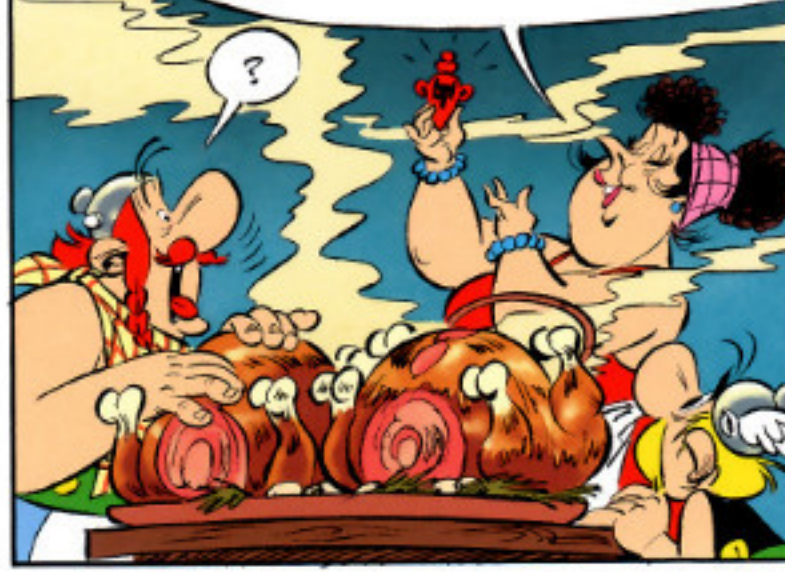


AND HERE ARE THE PASTAE, MY GAULISH FRIENDS!  
IT'S FROM THE EAST: THINLY SLICED DOUGH  
COOKED IN CREAM. EVEN IN ROME THEY DON'T  
MAKE IT THIS GOOD!



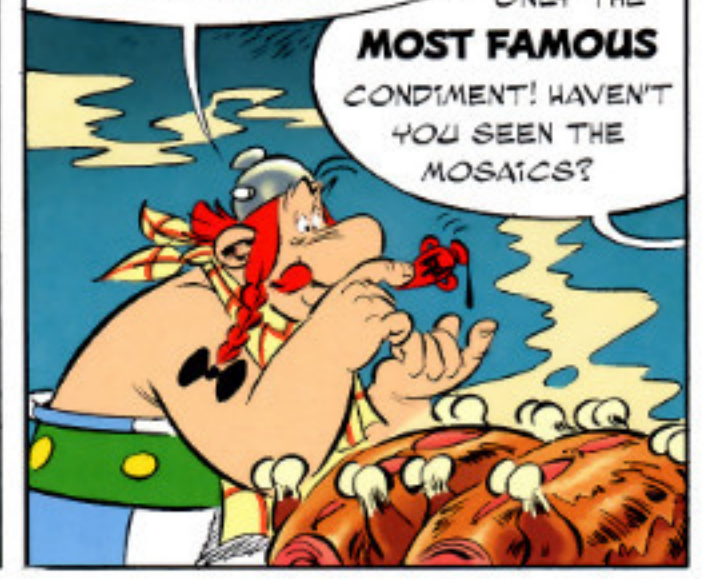
YOU SLICE  
EVERYTHING  
THINLY HERE!

... AND TO SEASON IT, AN  
AMPHORETTA OF GARUM FROM  
OUR SPONSOR, LUPUS.



WHAT EXACTLY IS THIS  
GARUM EVERYONE'S  
TALKING ABOUT?

ONLY THE  
**MOST FAMOUS**  
CONDIMENT! HAVEN'T  
YOU SEEN THE  
MOSAICS?



ON THE RIGHT BEFORE THE  
VESTIBULUM, PAST THE  
ATRIUM.



HERE,  
BACILLUS! THAT'S  
THE ADVANCE WE  
AGREED!



THE SENATOR'S BANKING ON YOU  
TO ENSURE VICTORY FOR  
CORONAVIRUS.

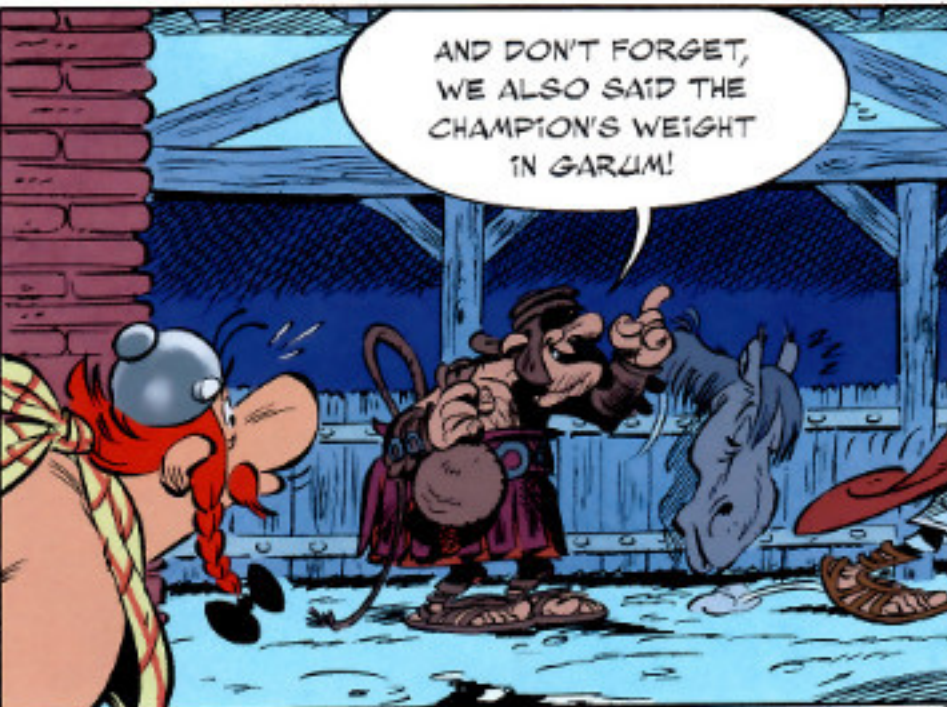


THE BALANCE WILL BE PAID AT THE END OF THE  
RACE ... IF THE CHAMPION WINS, OF COURSE.

HE'LL WIN! I HOPE  
YOU REMEMBERED MY  
LITTLE CUT?



AND DON'T FORGET,  
WE ALSO SAID THE  
CHAMPION'S WEIGHT  
IN GARUM!

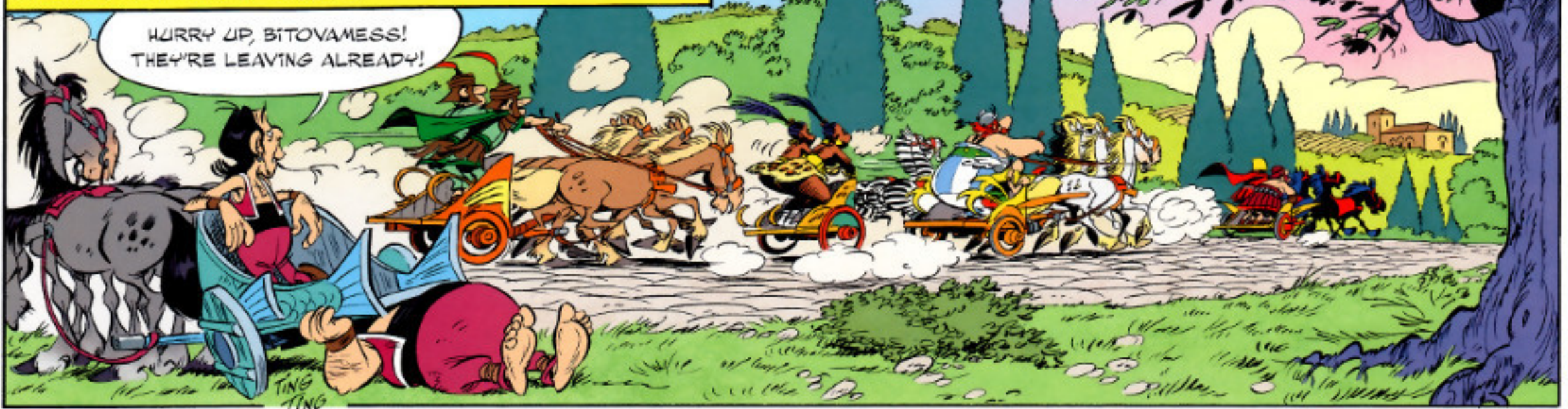


I'D PREFER MY OWN  
WEIGHT IN WILD BOAR IF  
THAT'S POSSIBLE ...

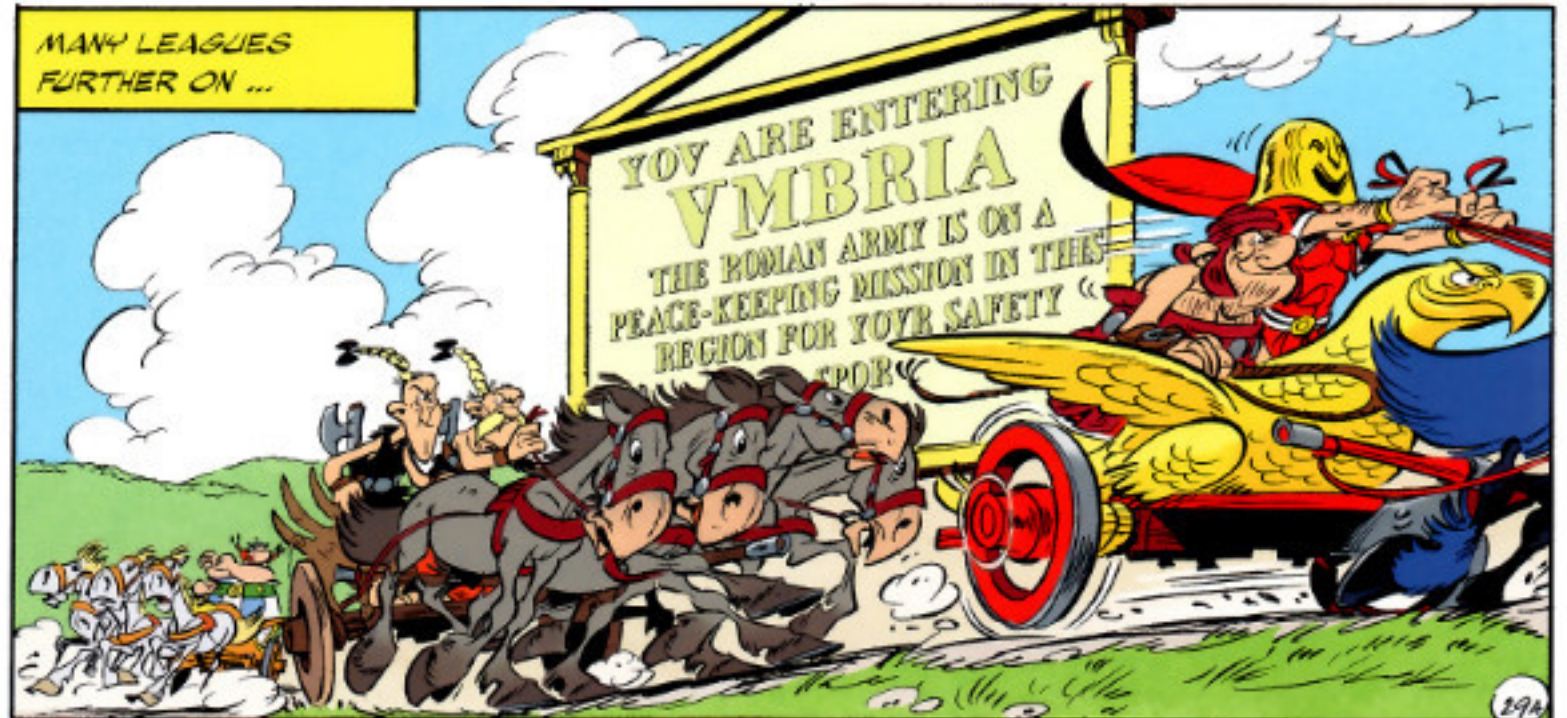




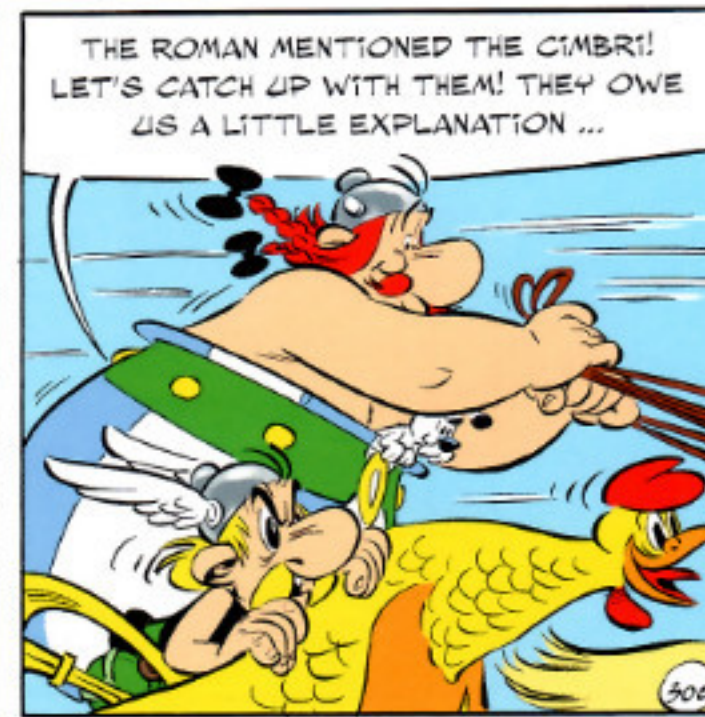
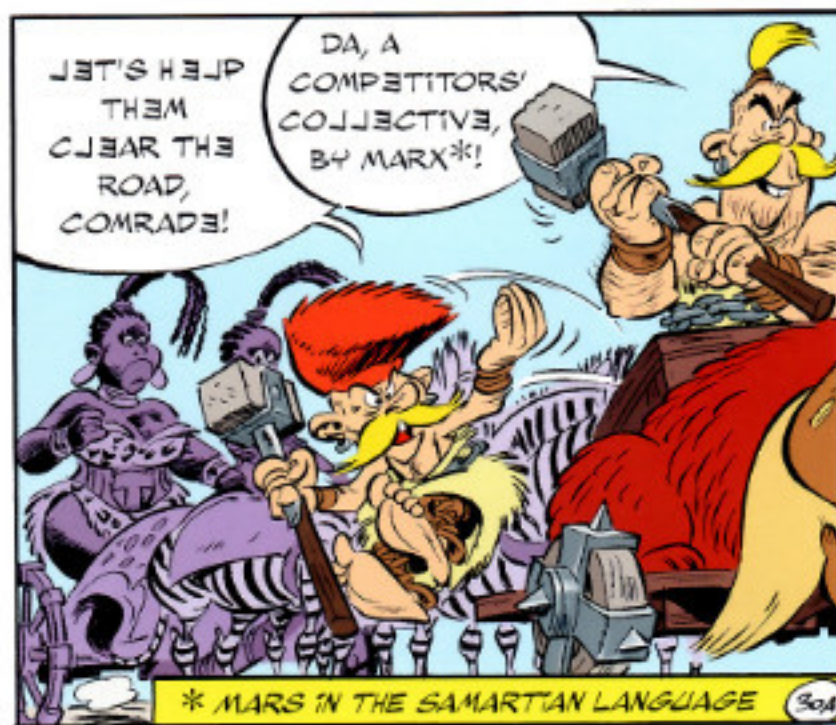
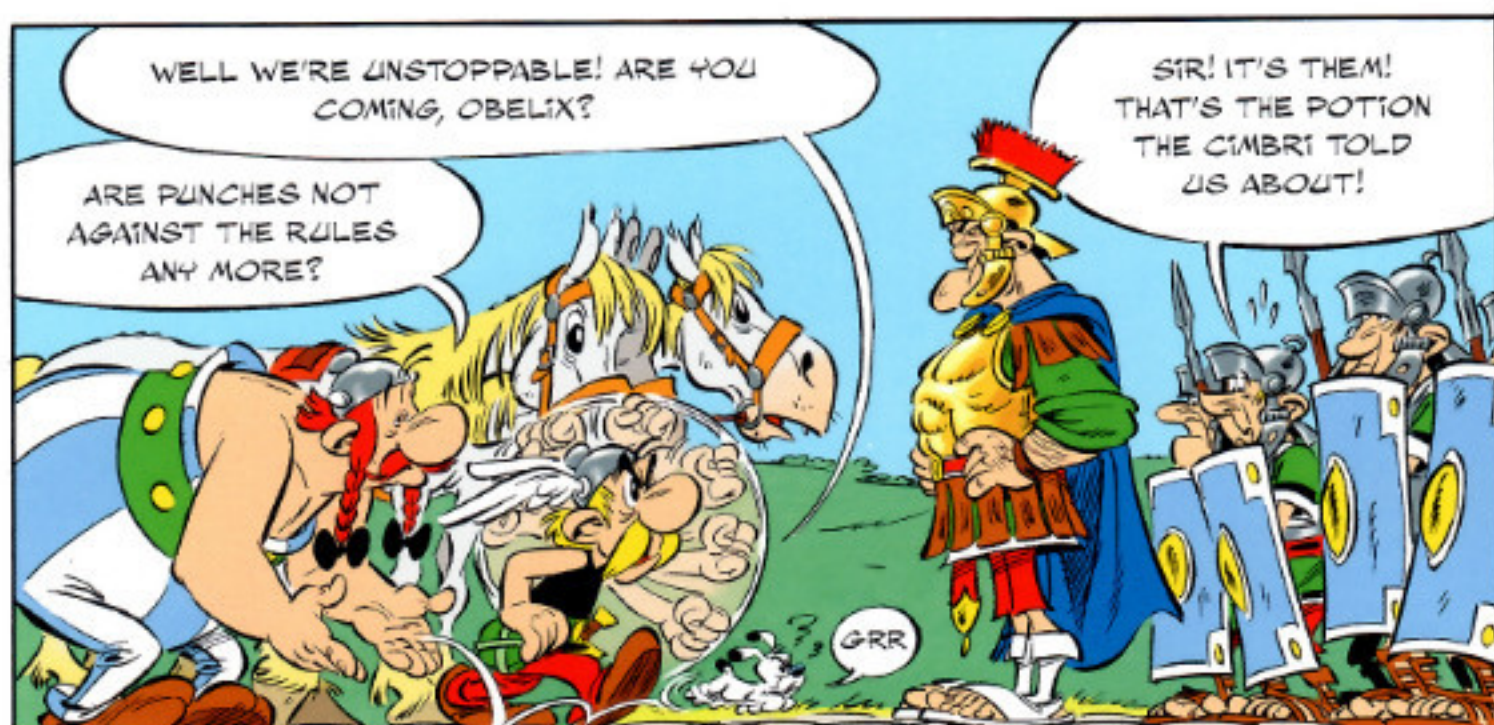
AND AT THE CRACK OF DAWN, THE RACE SETS OFF FROM SENA JULIA ON TO THE NEXT STAGE ...



\* TIVOLI





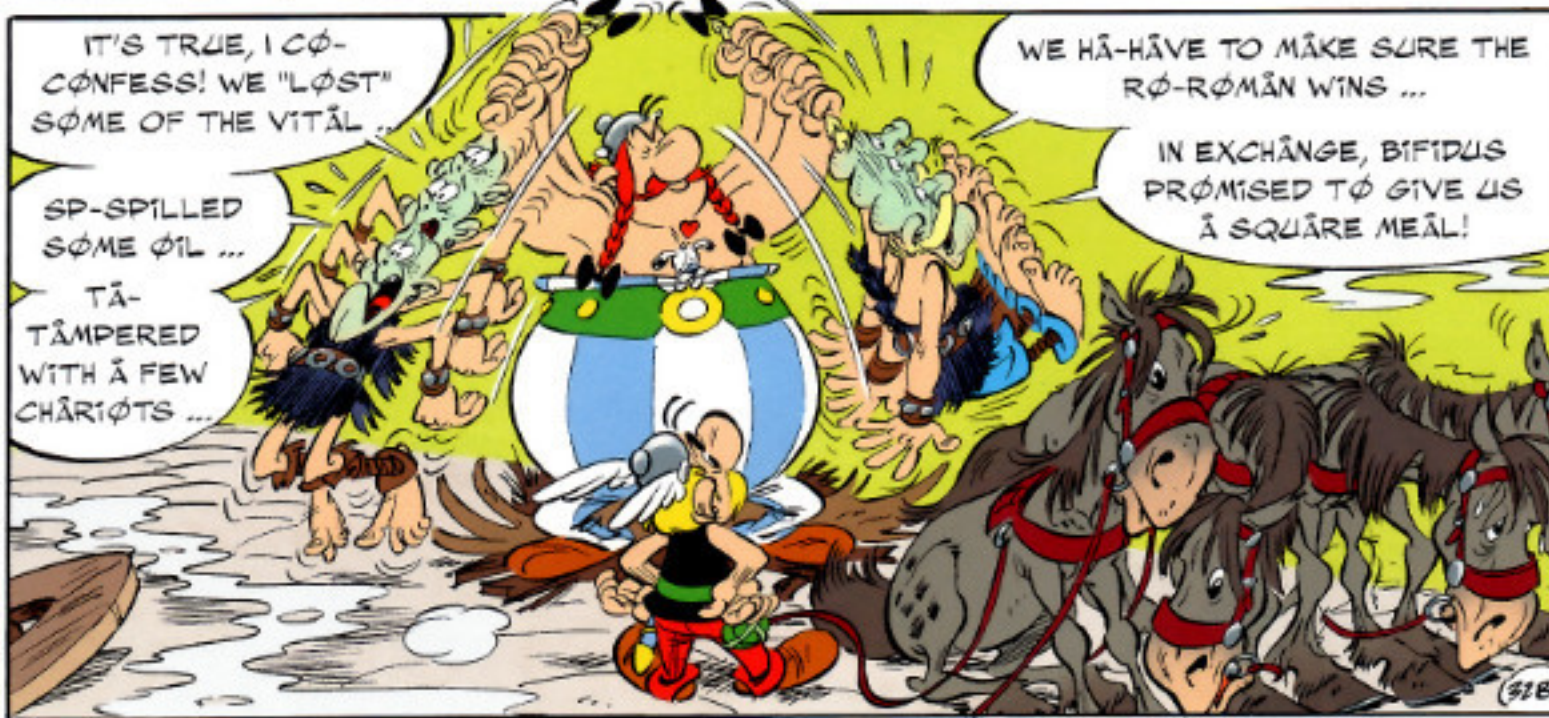
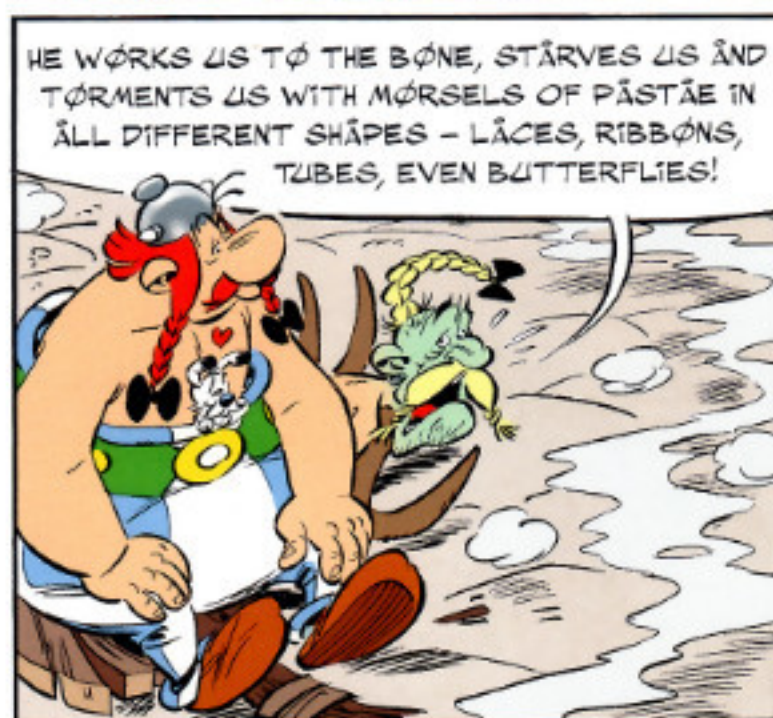
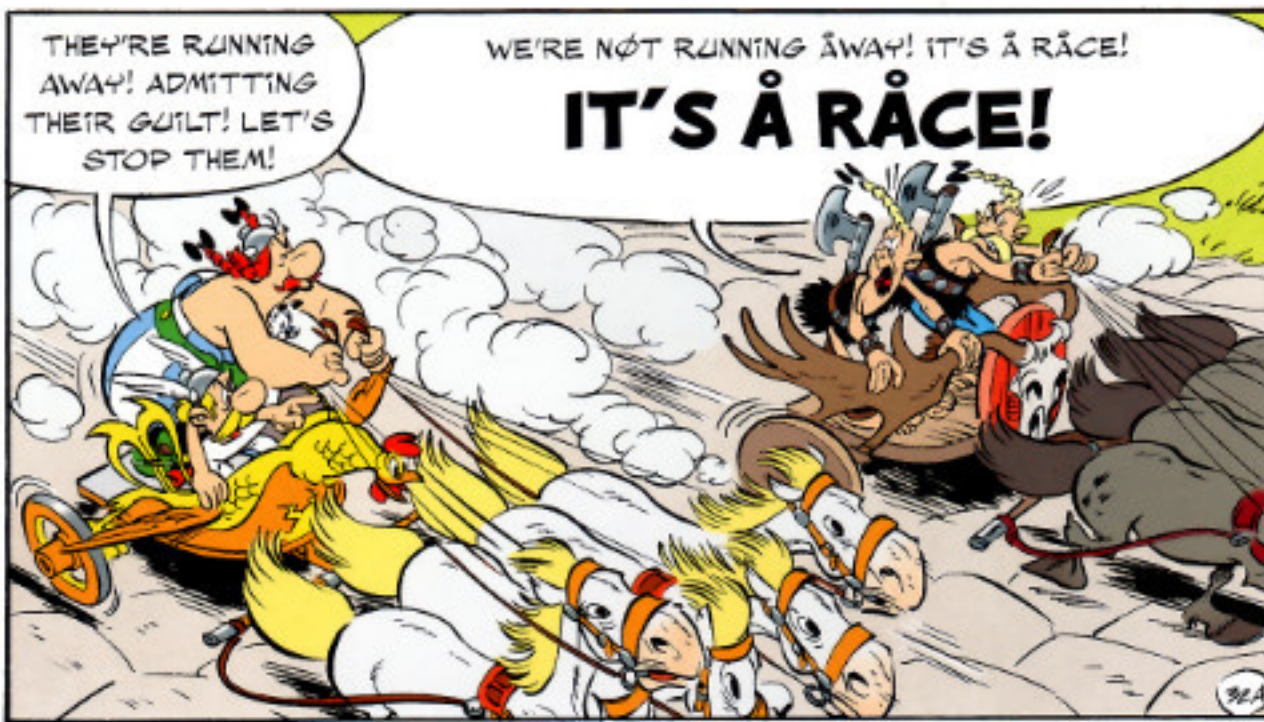
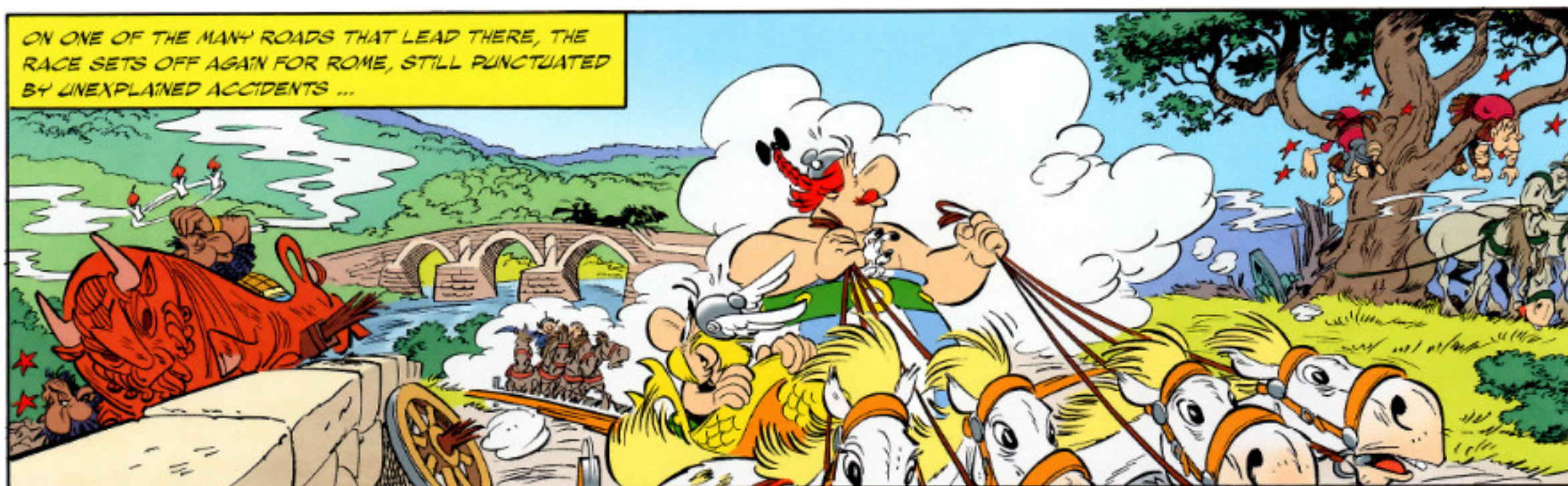




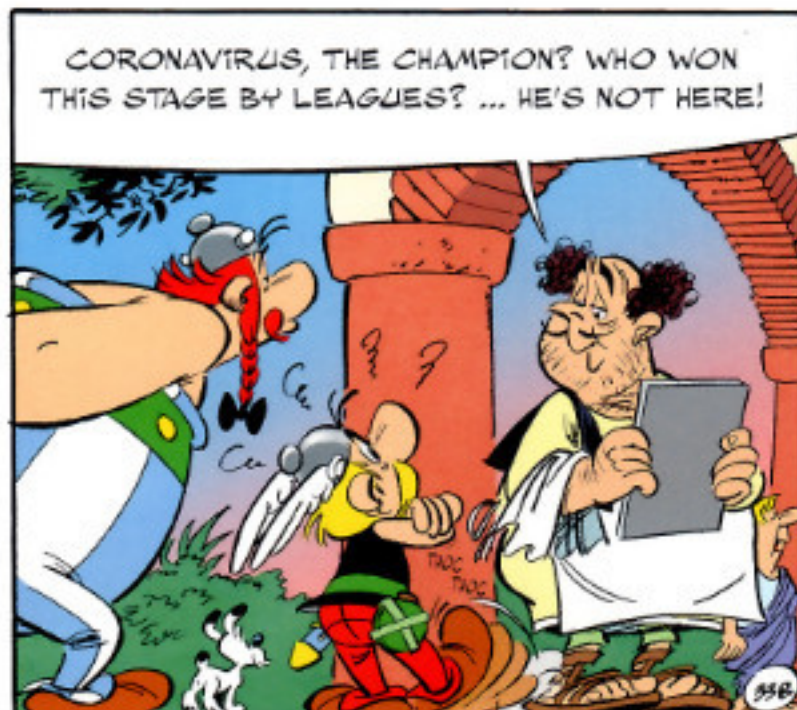
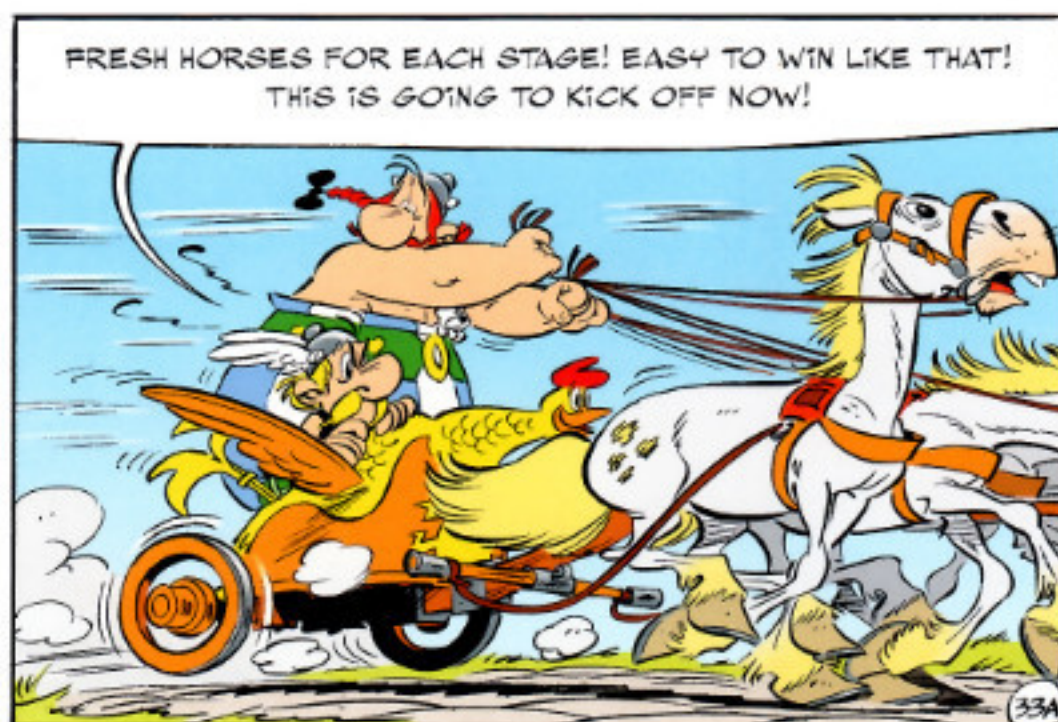
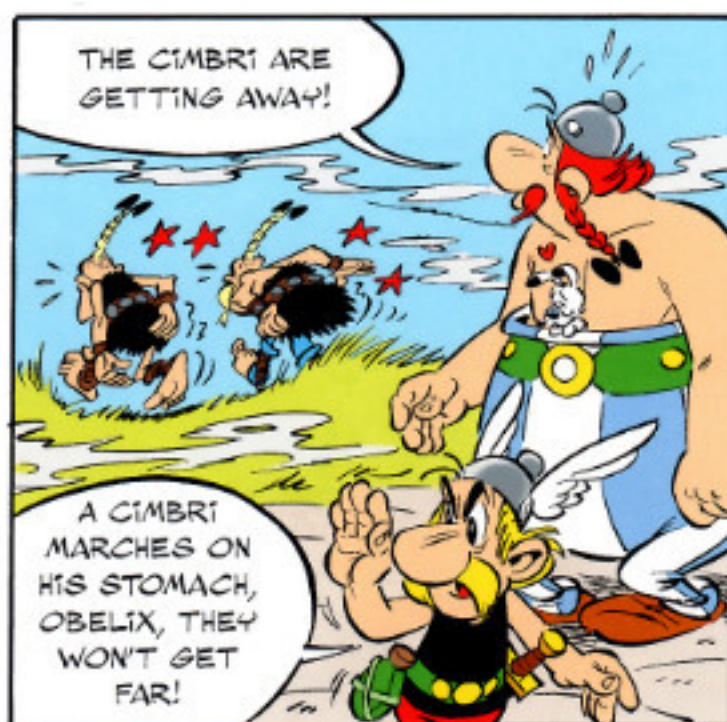
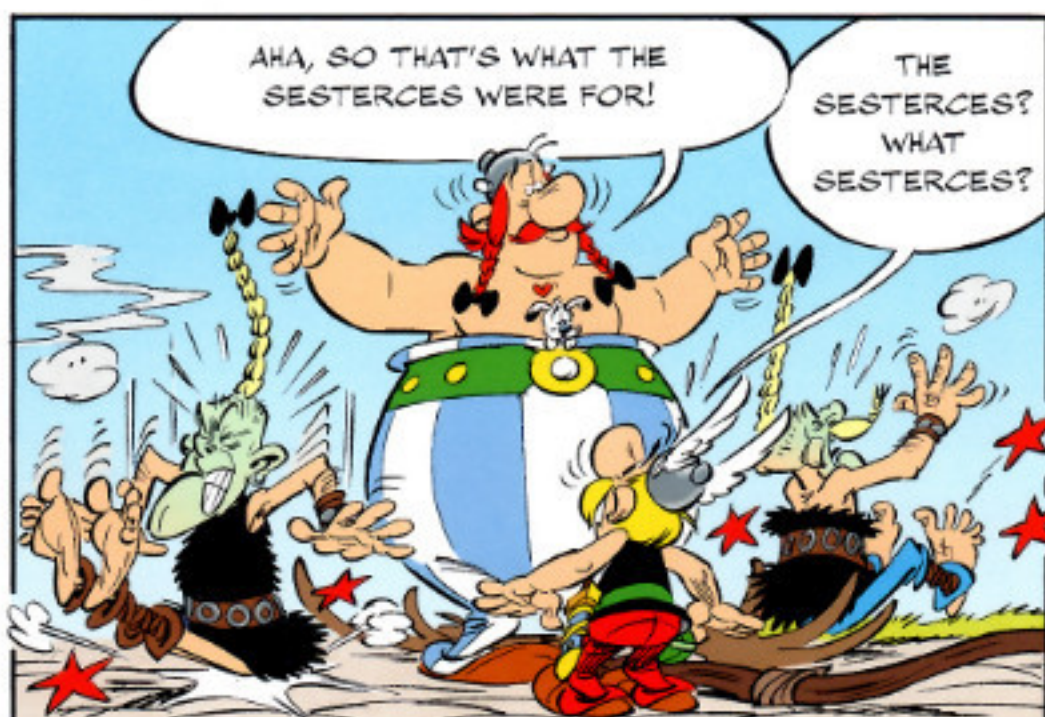
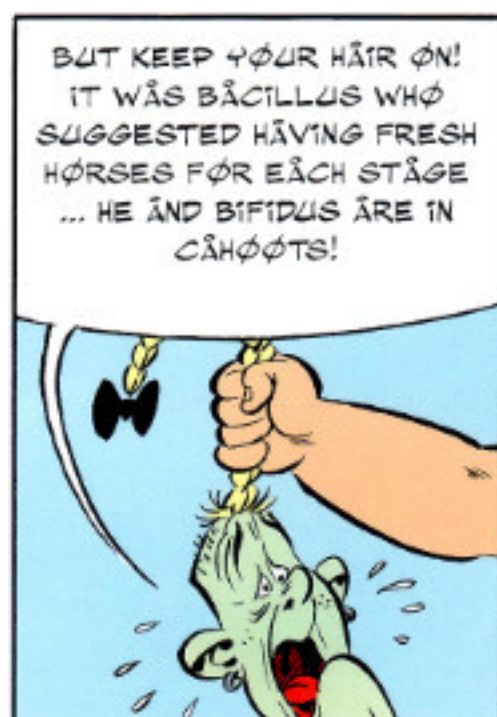




ON ONE OF THE MANY ROADS THAT LEAD THERE, THE RACE SETS OFF AGAIN FOR ROME, STILL PUNCTUATED BY UNEXPLAINED ACCIDENTS ...









HE'S A GUEST OF SENATOR BIFIDUS, WHO HAS A SMALL HOLIDAY VILLA NOT FAR FROM HERE!



MY FRIENDS, THIS GLORIOUS RACE HAS MADE ME PERSONA GRATA AT THE SENATE. THANKS TO YOU, I'M BACK TO RUNNING THE SESTERCES FOR THE ROMAN ROADS AS I SEE FIT!

AND DE FACTO TO FUNDING YOUR OWN LIFESTYLE!

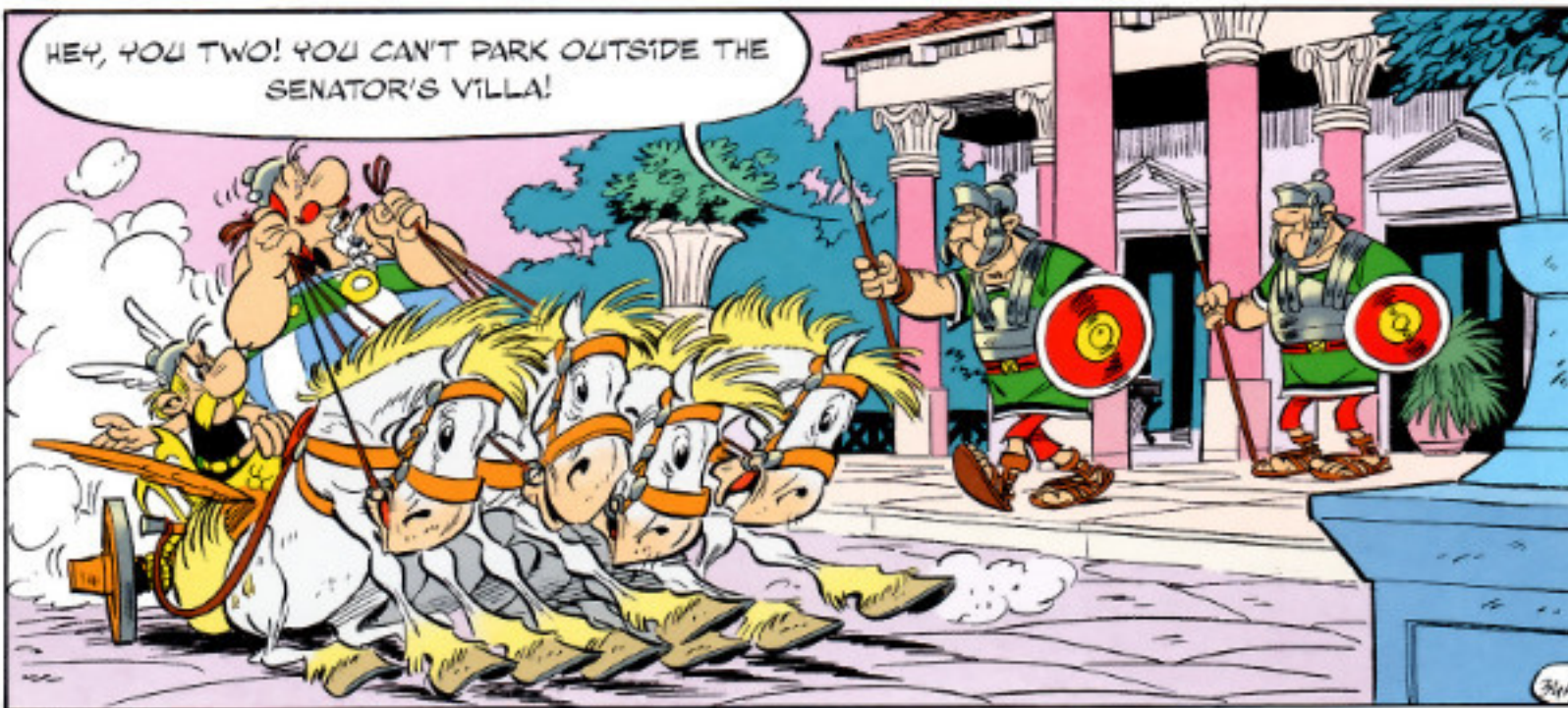


LACTUS, THE ORGY'S READY!

JUST COMING, MOZZARELLA!



HEY, YOU TWO! YOU CAN'T PARK OUTSIDE THE SENATOR'S VILLA!



?!

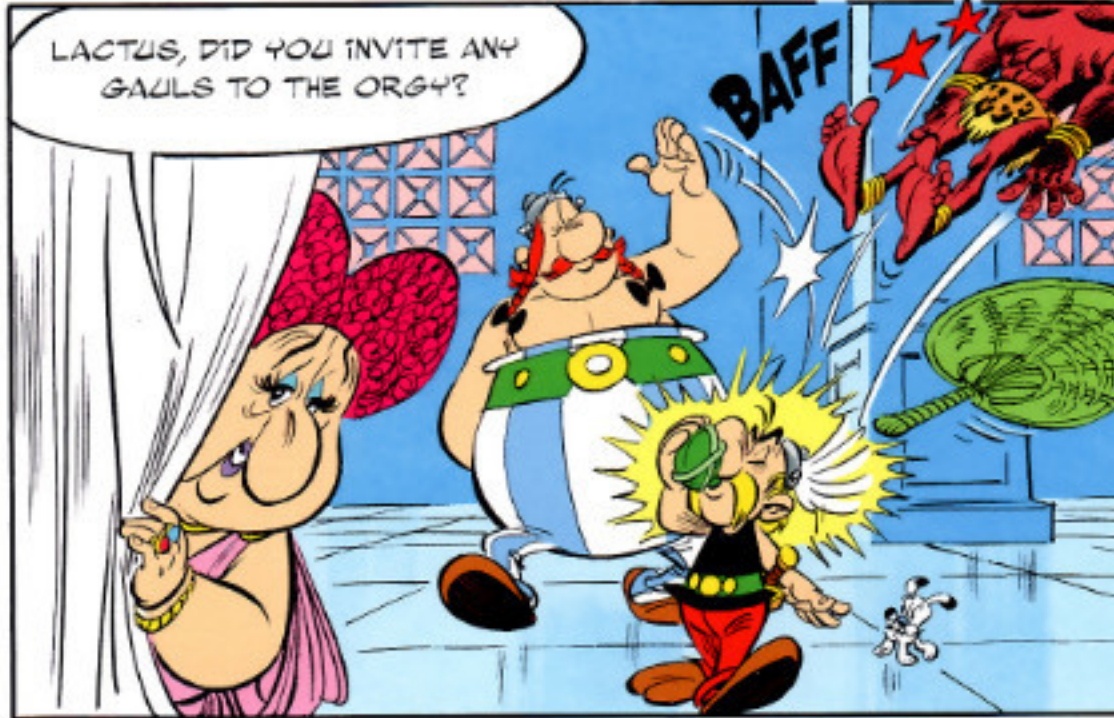
BIFF

BAFF



LACTUS, DID YOU INVITE ANY GAULS TO THE ORGY?

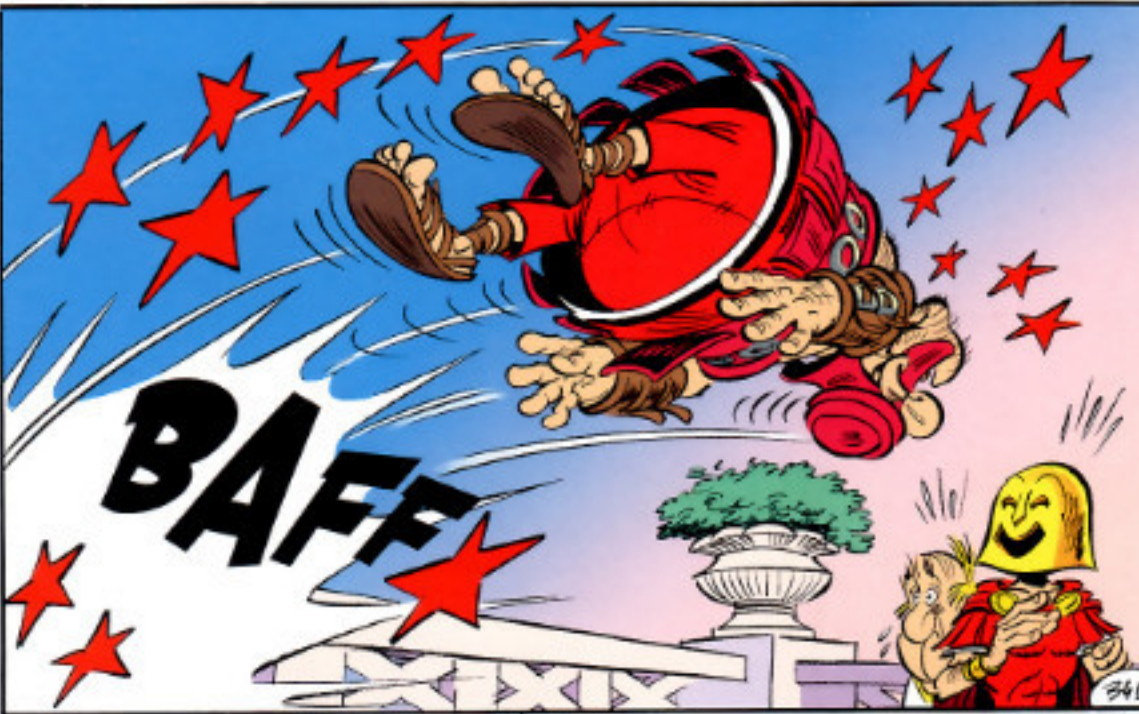
BAFF



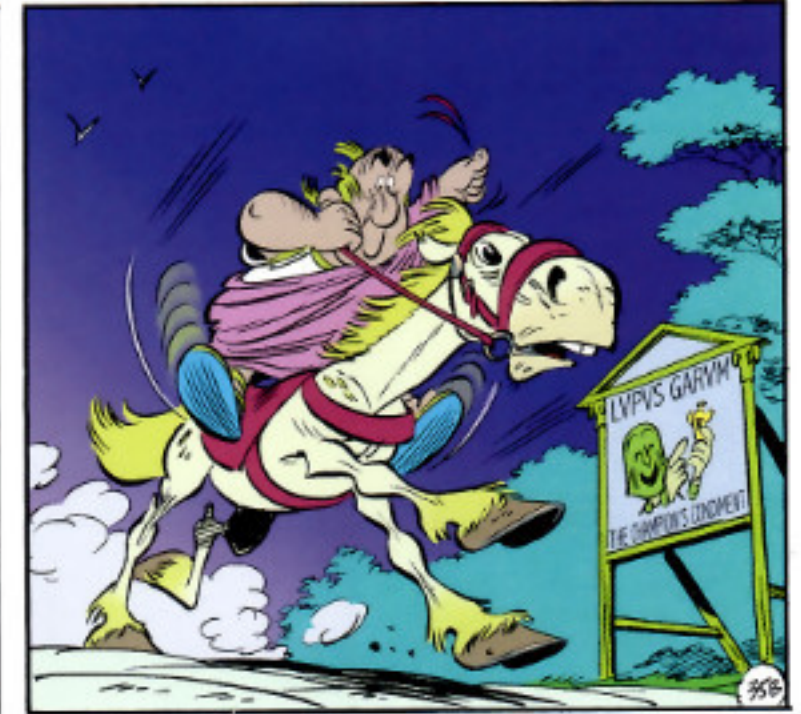
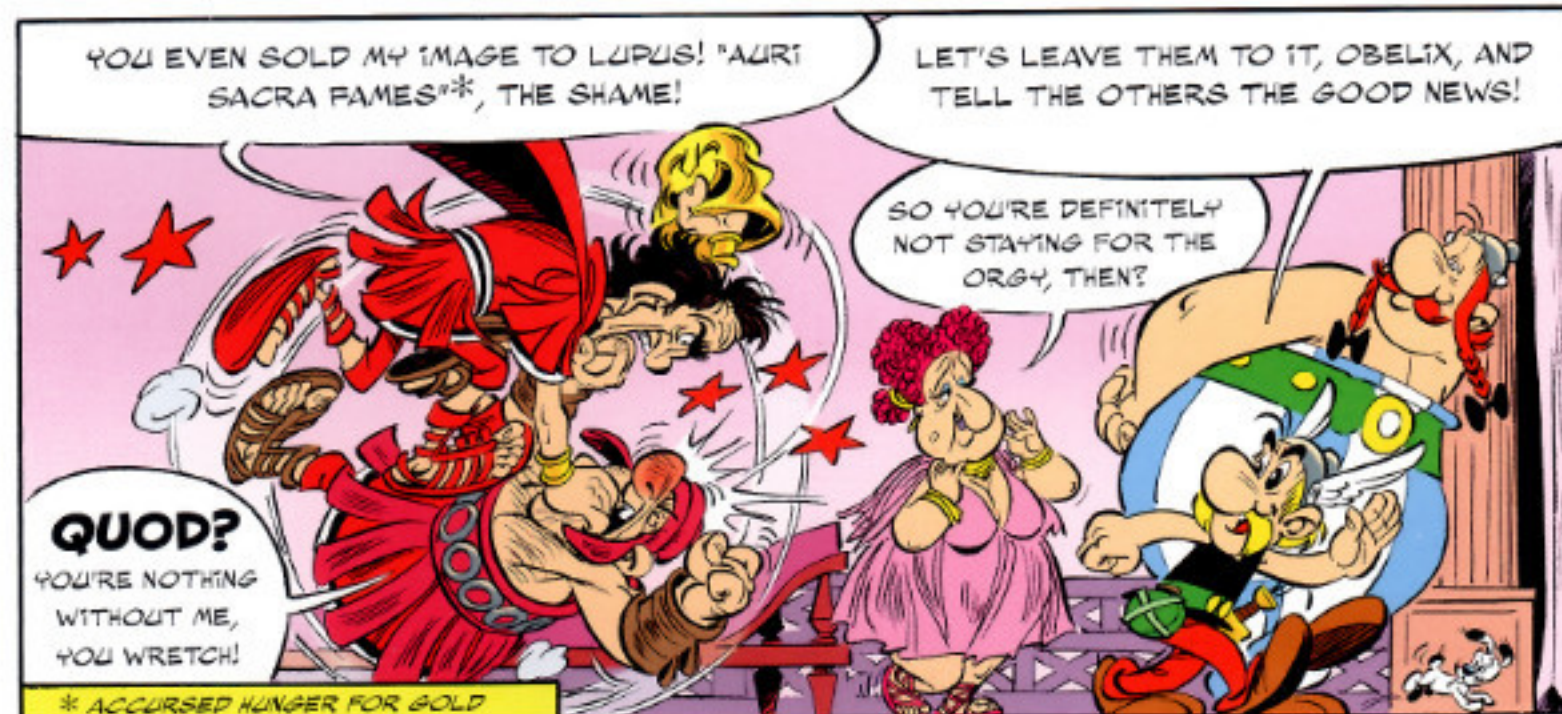
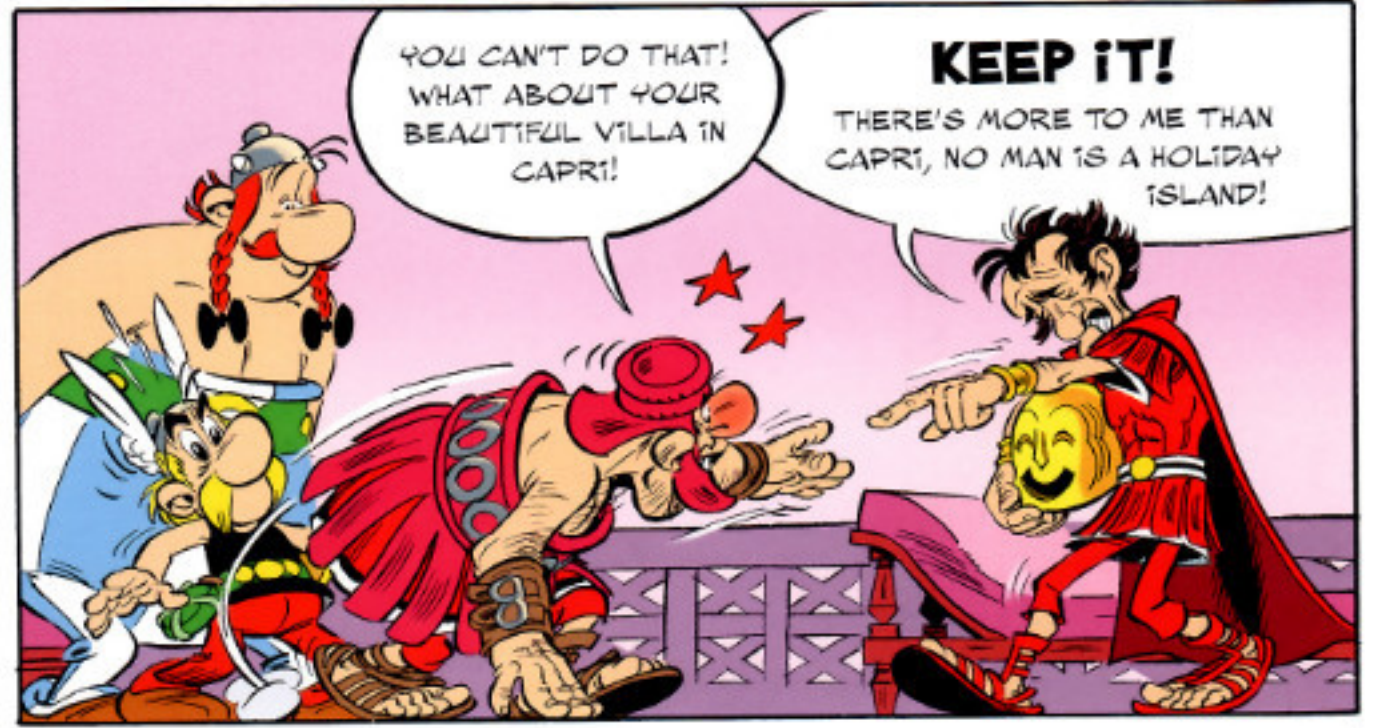
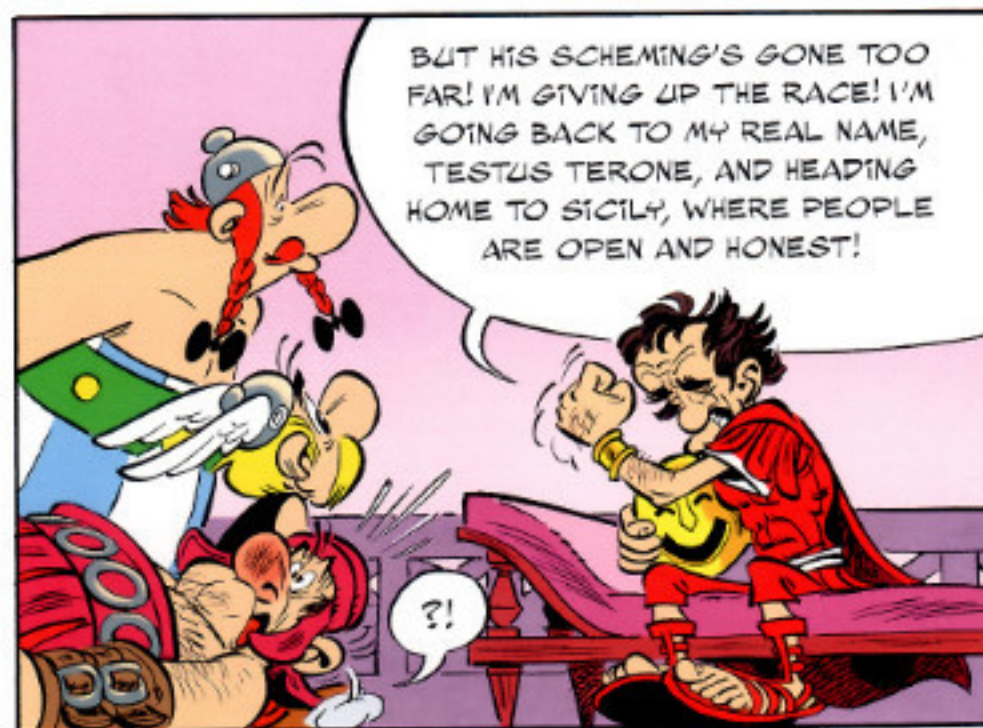
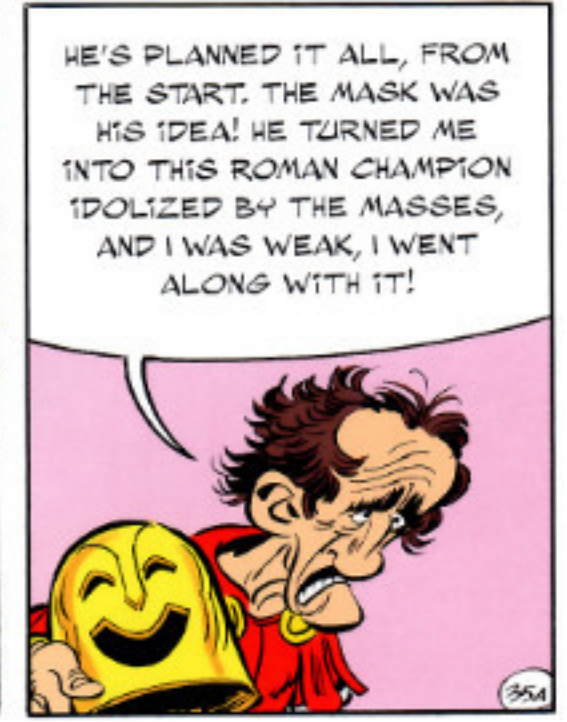
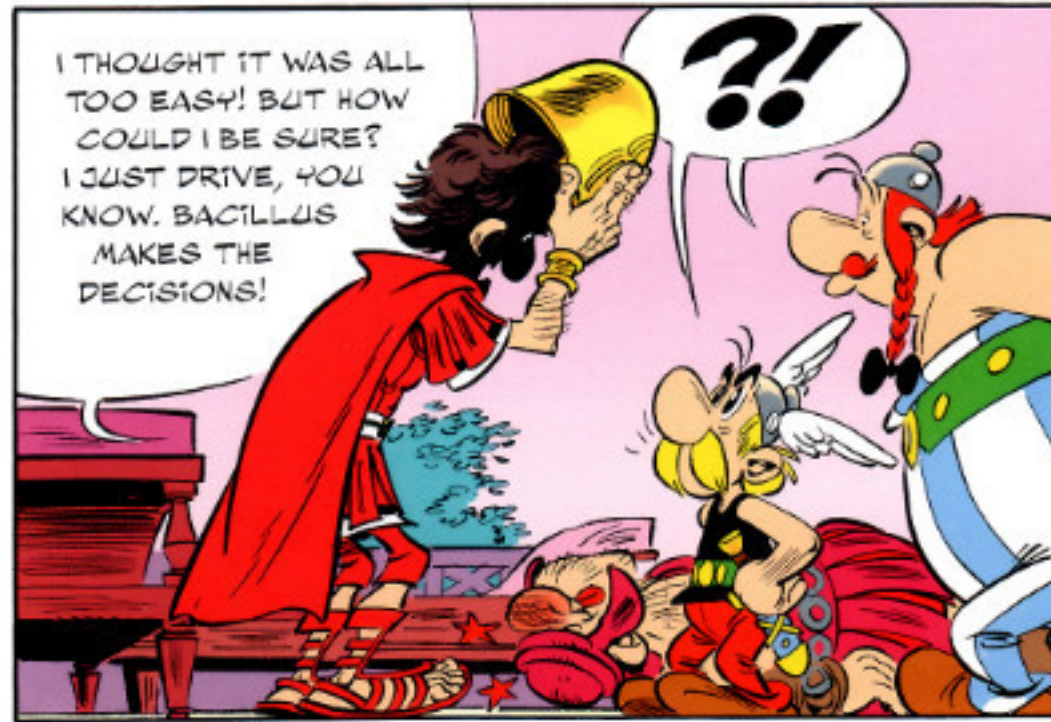
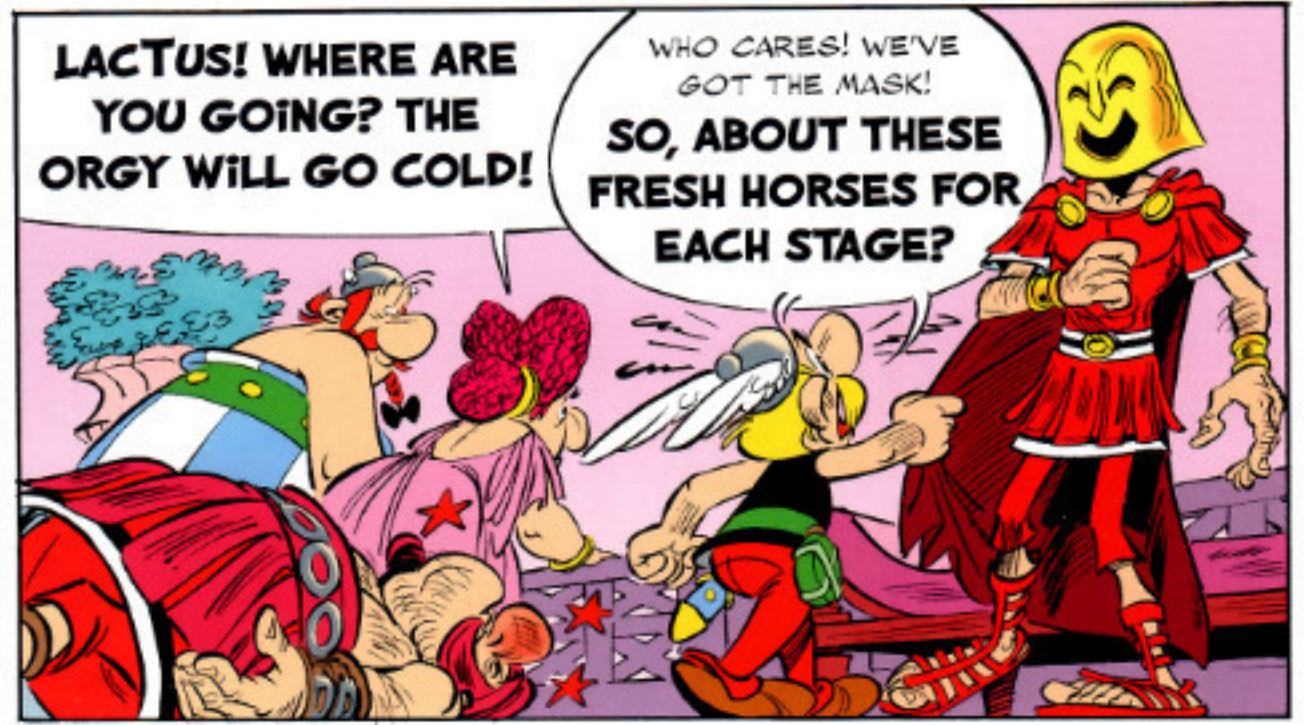
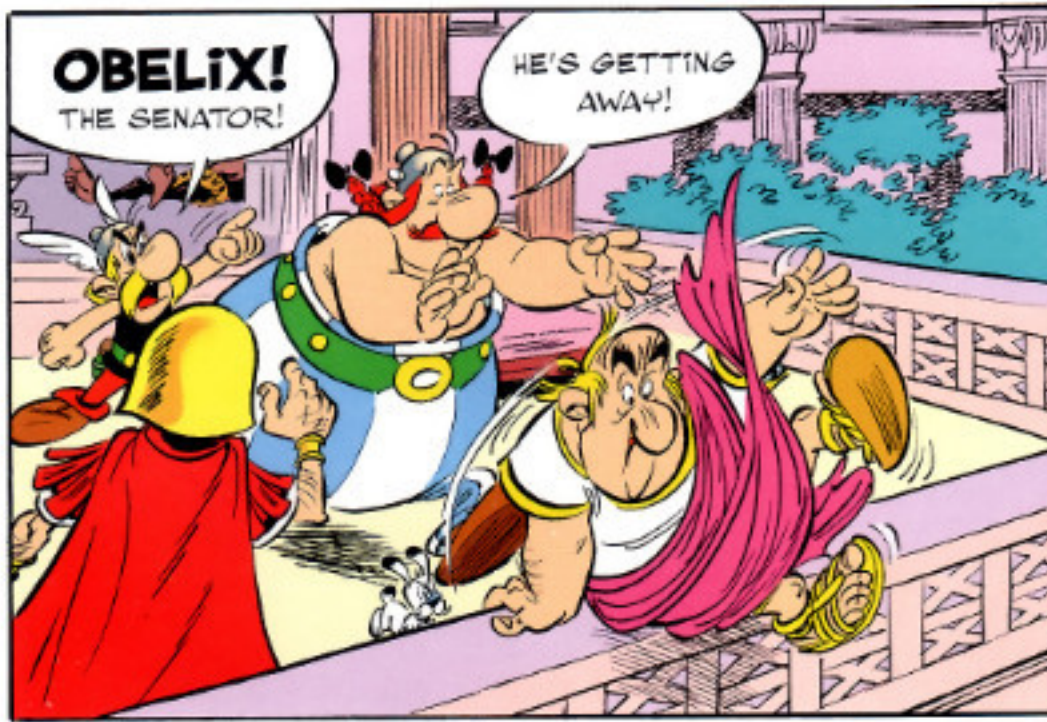
WAIT, I'LL BE BACK! WE WOULDN'T WANT THEM TO HAVE A WASTED JOURNEY.



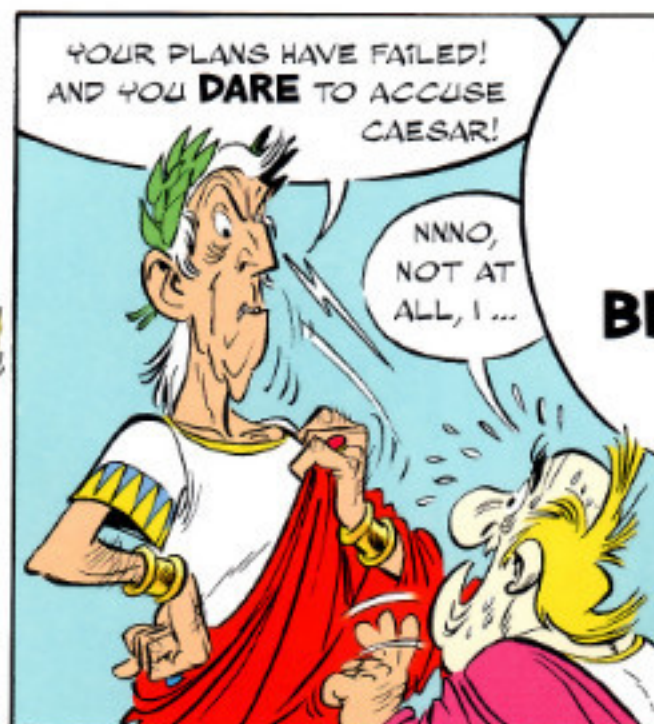
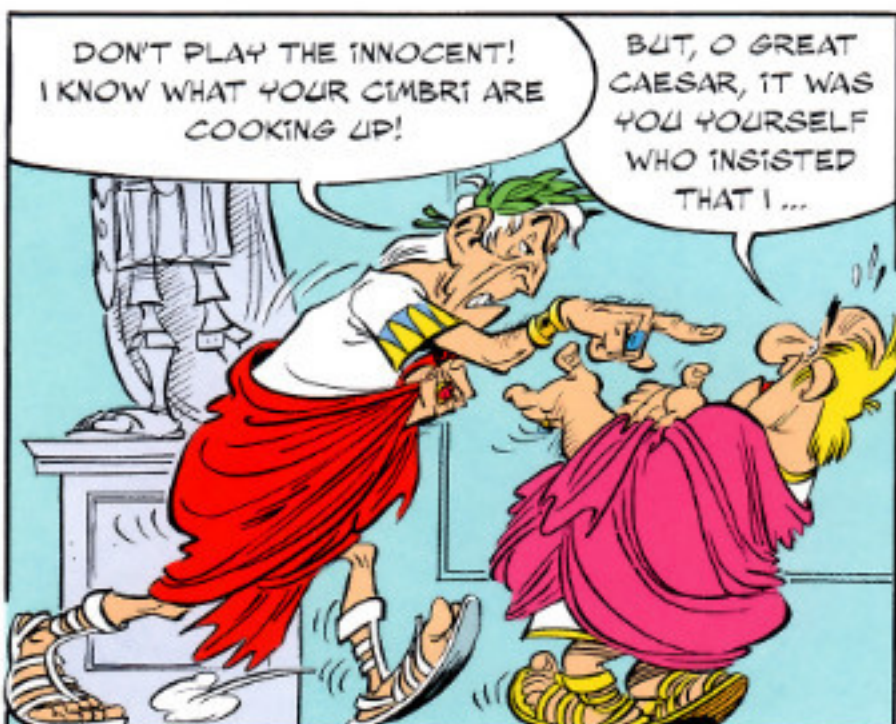
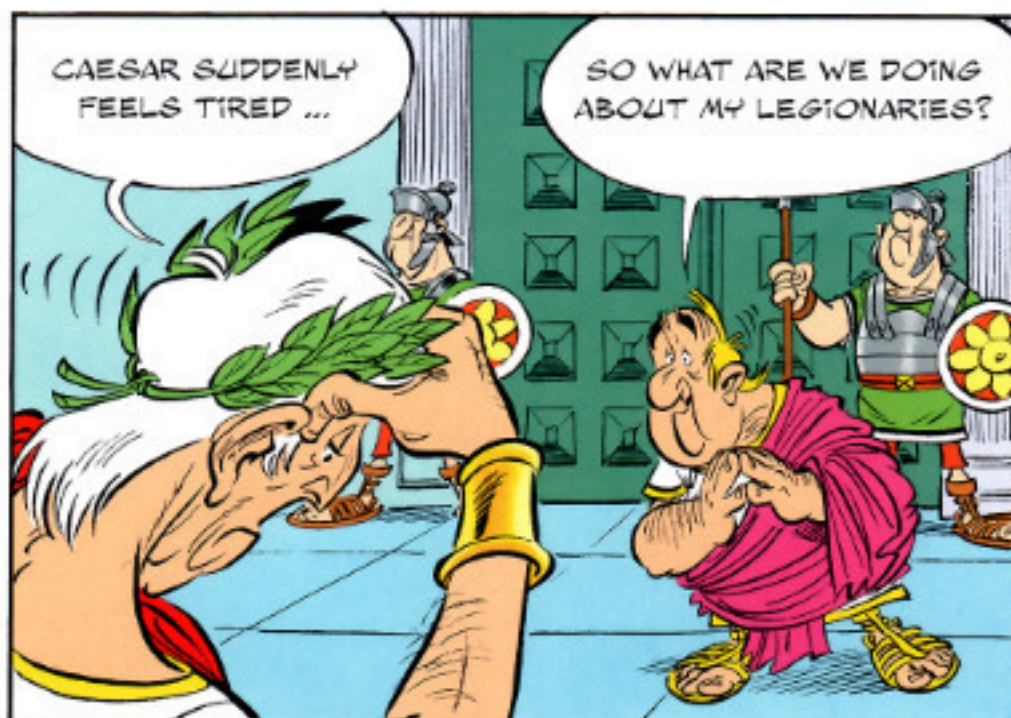
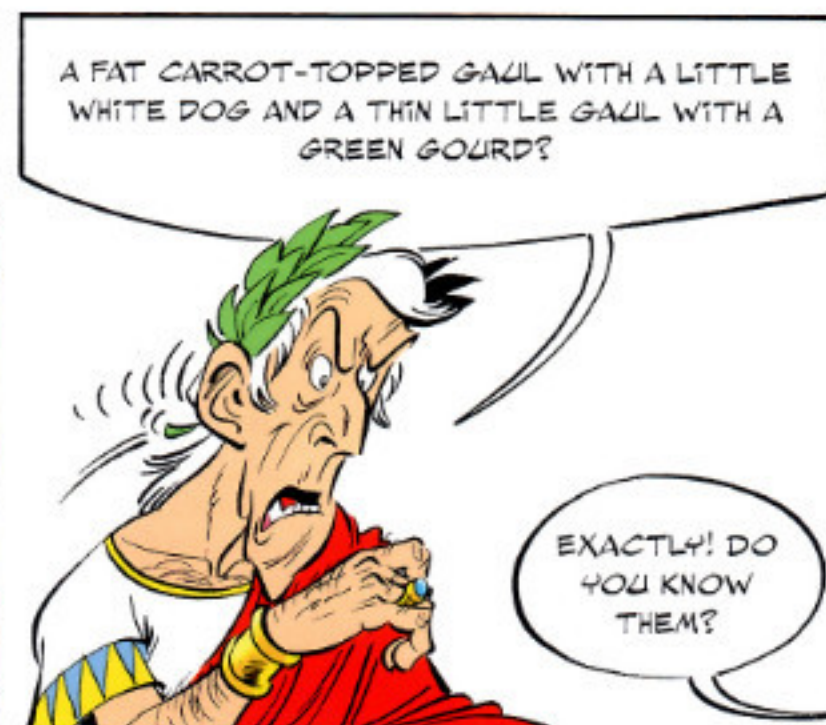
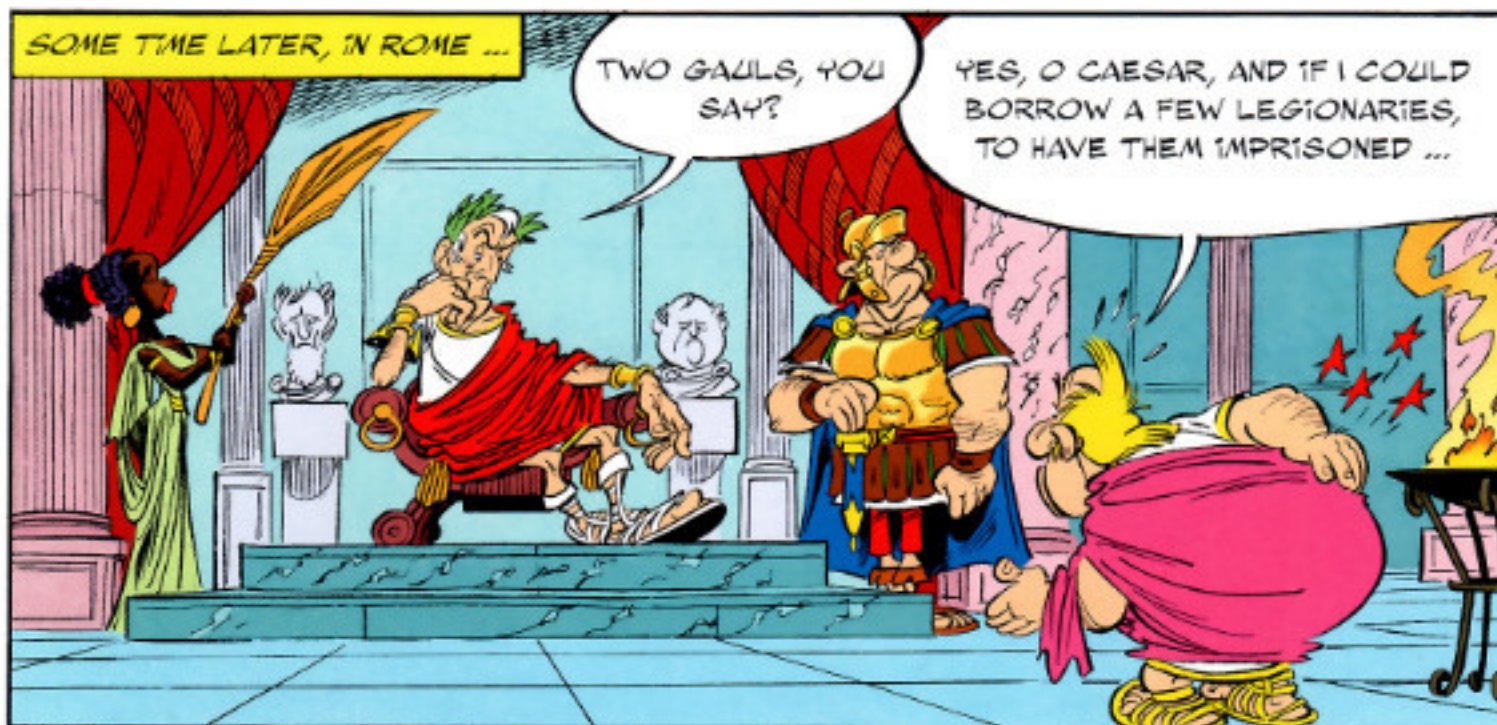
BAFF









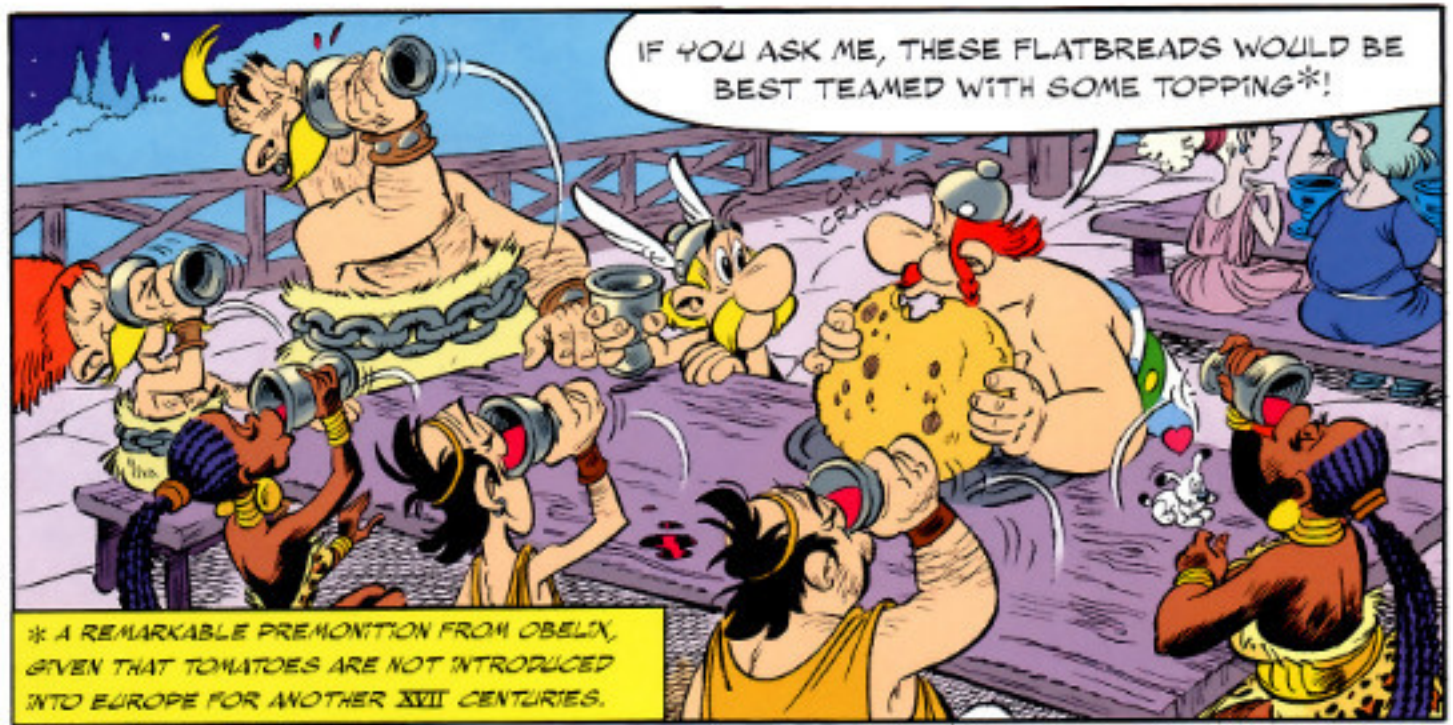




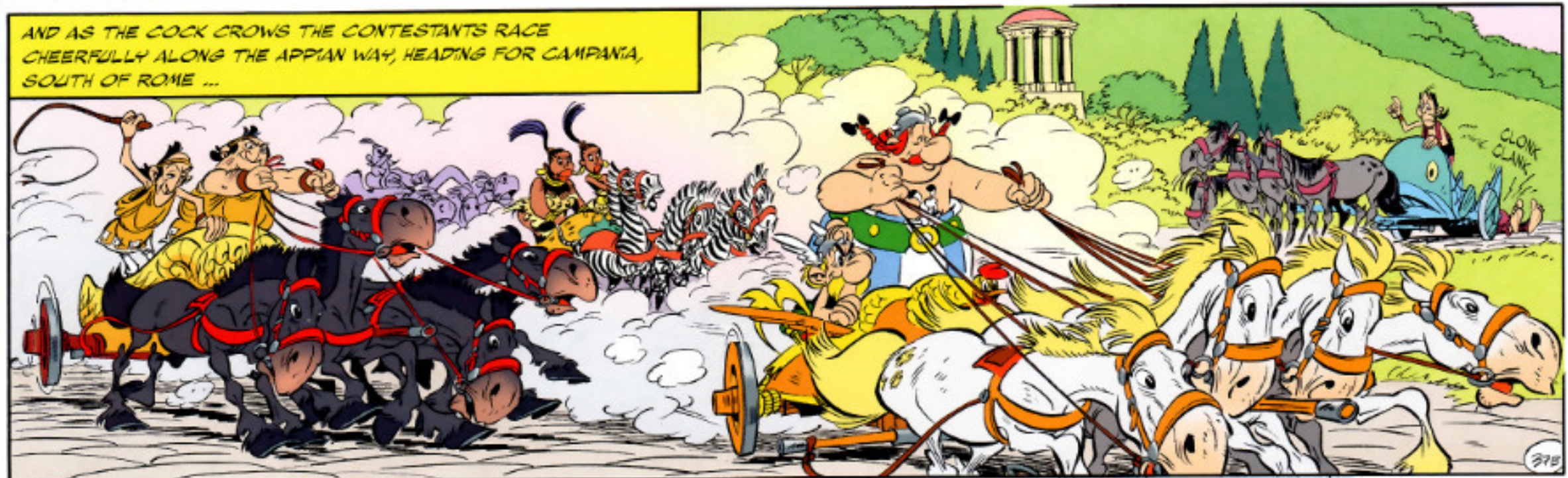
MEANWHILE, AT THE ROADSIDE INN IN TIBUR, THE REMAINING CONTESTANTS ARE CELEBRATING THE MASKED CHAMPION'S WITHDRAWAL ...



**AURIGAE!**  
LET'S  
CONTINUE  
THE RACE  
ON FAIR  
TERMS! MAY  
THE BEST  
TEAM  
WIN!



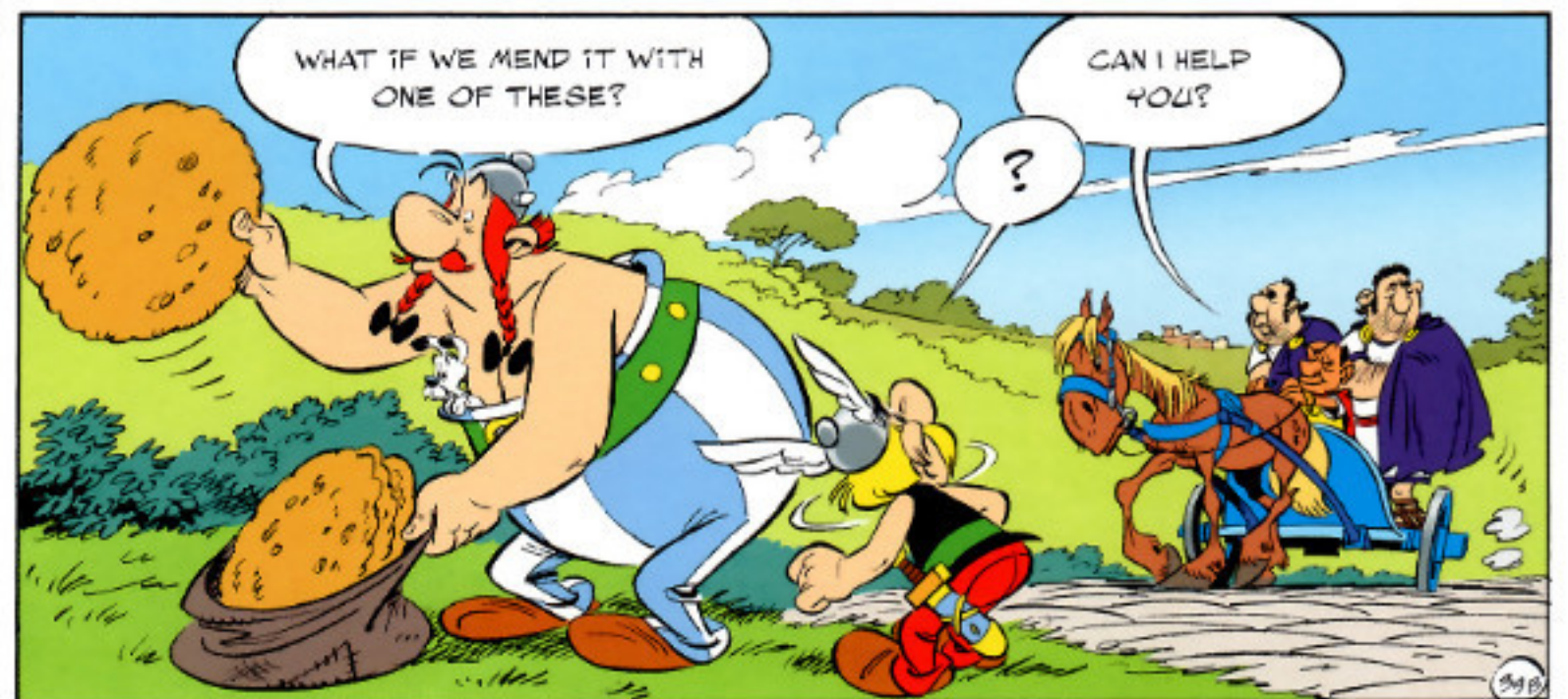
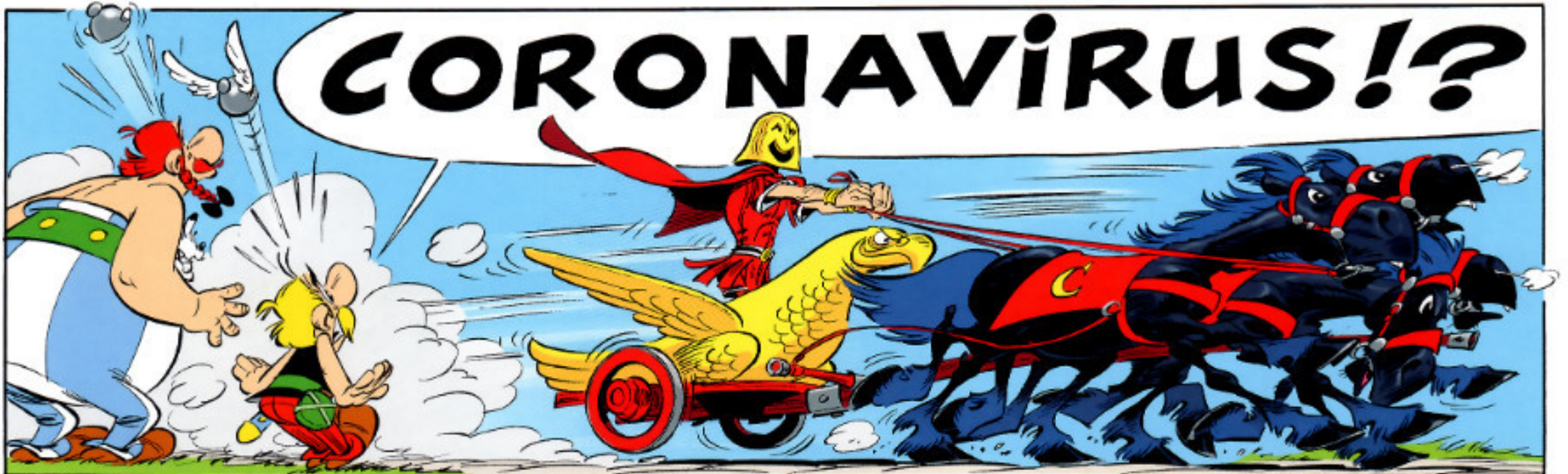
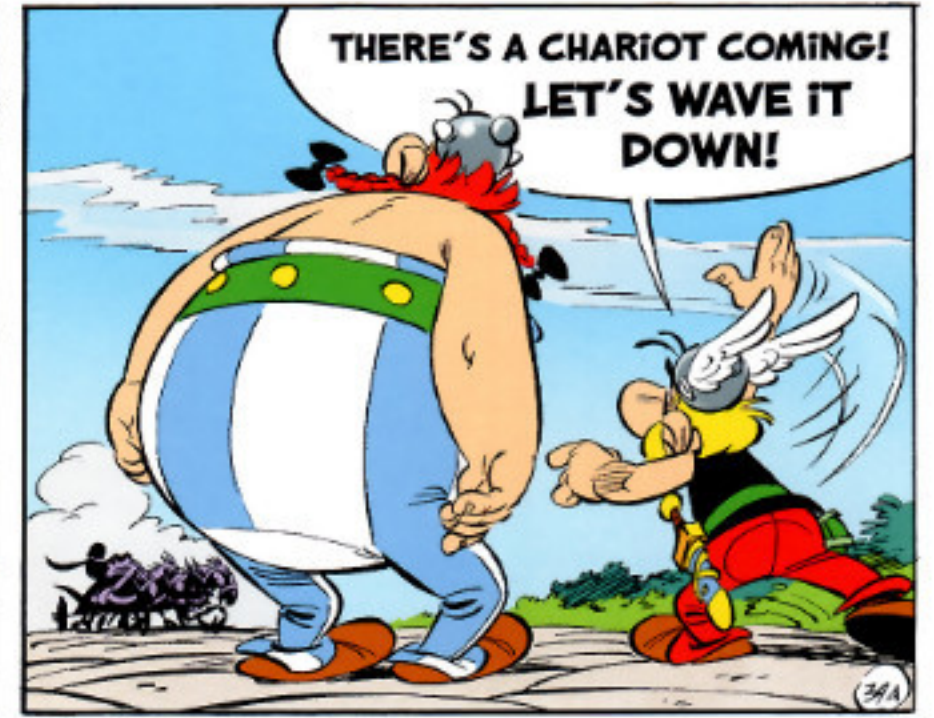
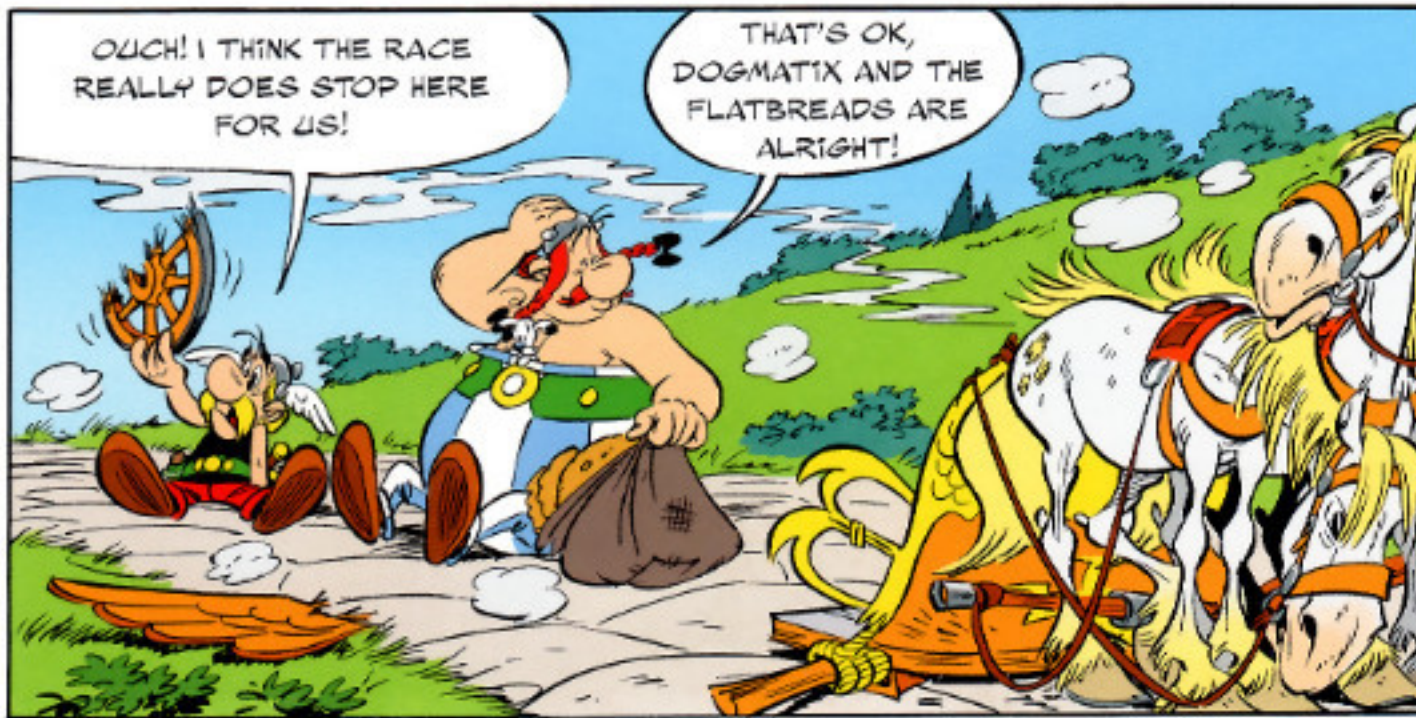
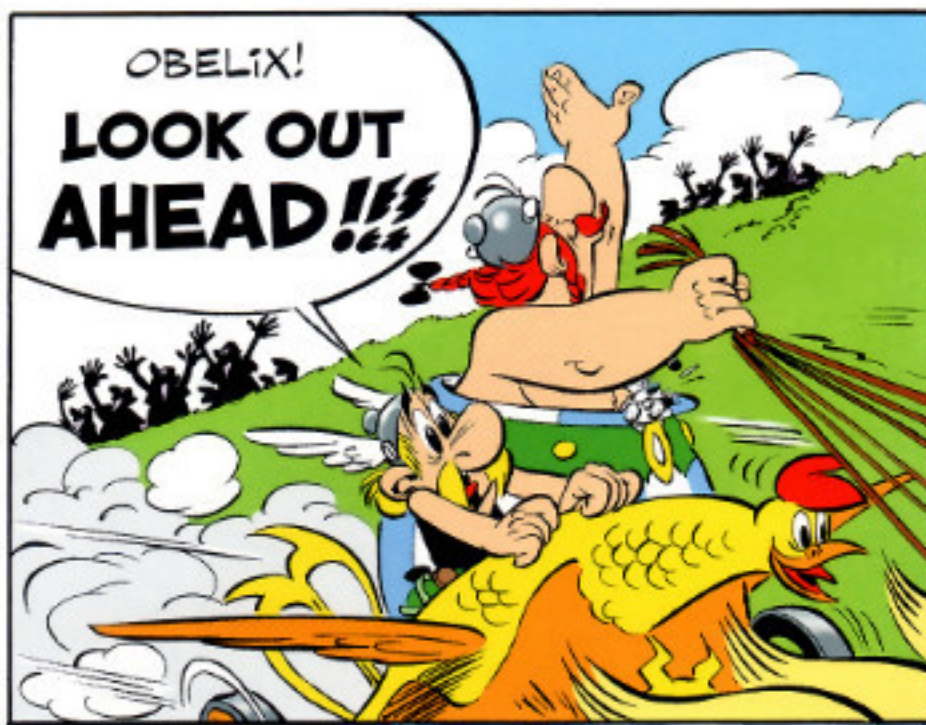
AND AS THE COCK CROWS THE CONTESTANTS RACE CHEERFULLY ALONG THE APPIAN WAY, HEADING FOR CAMPANIA, SOUTH OF ROME ...



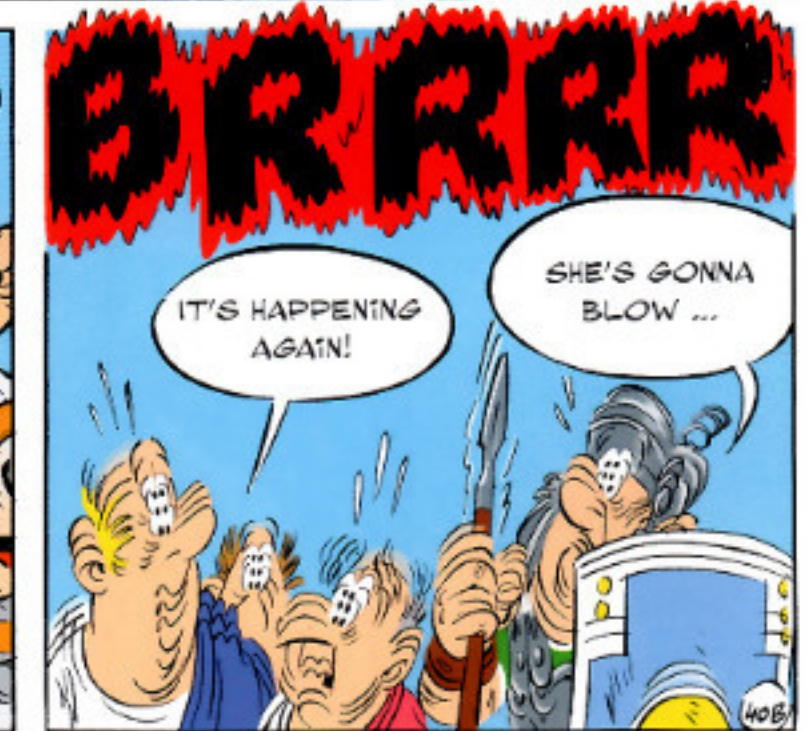
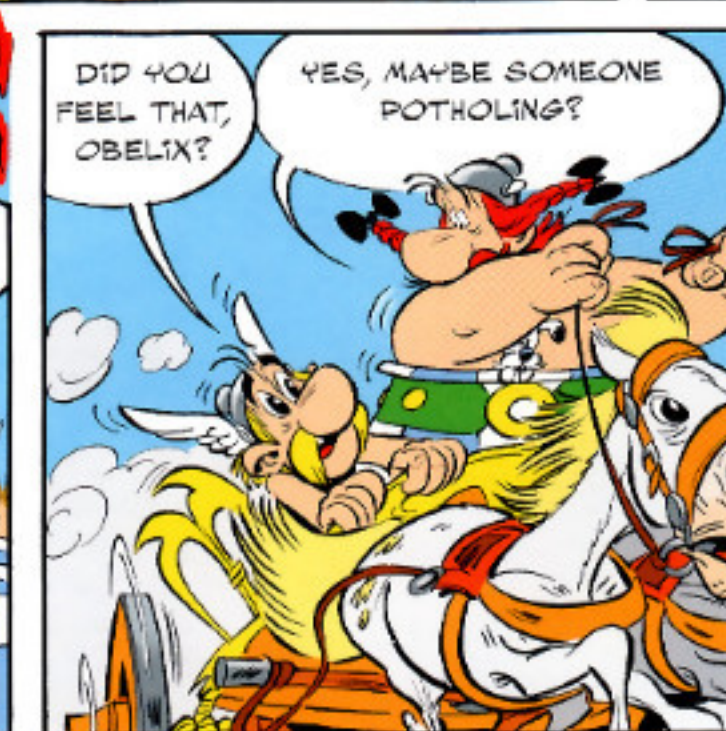
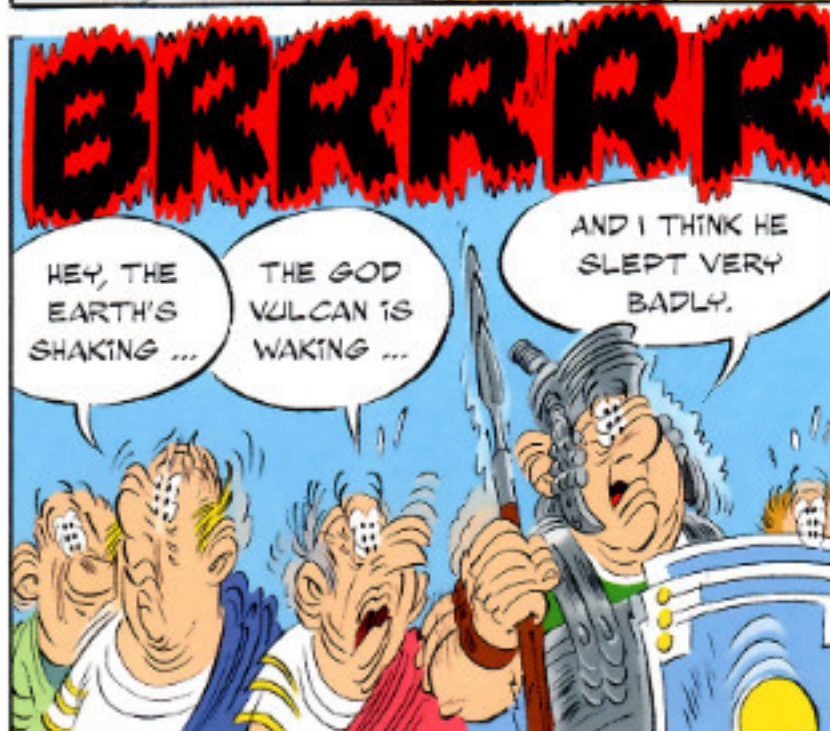
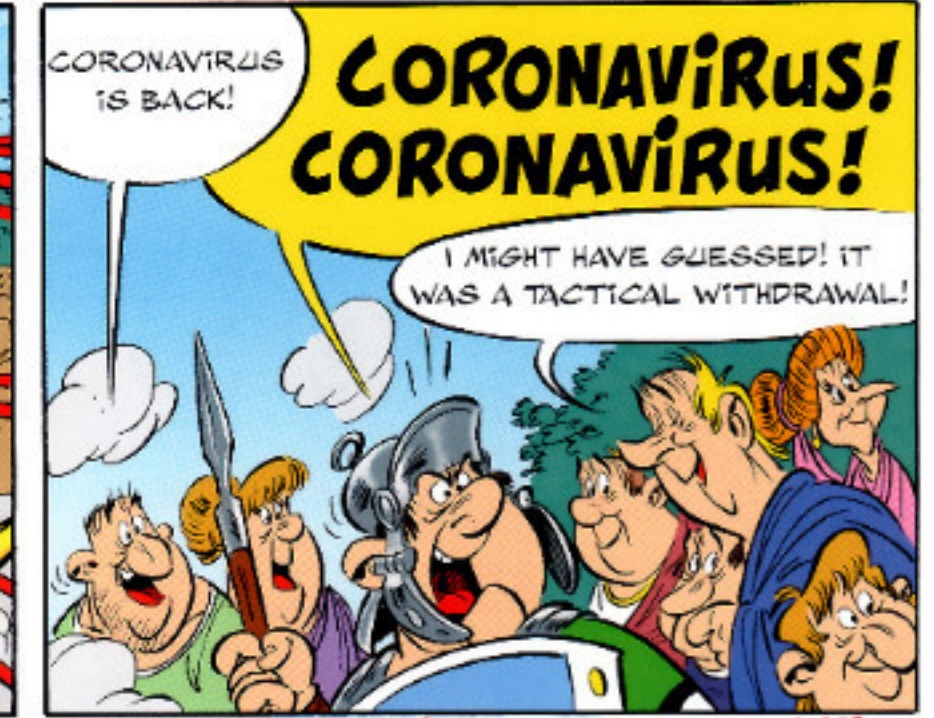
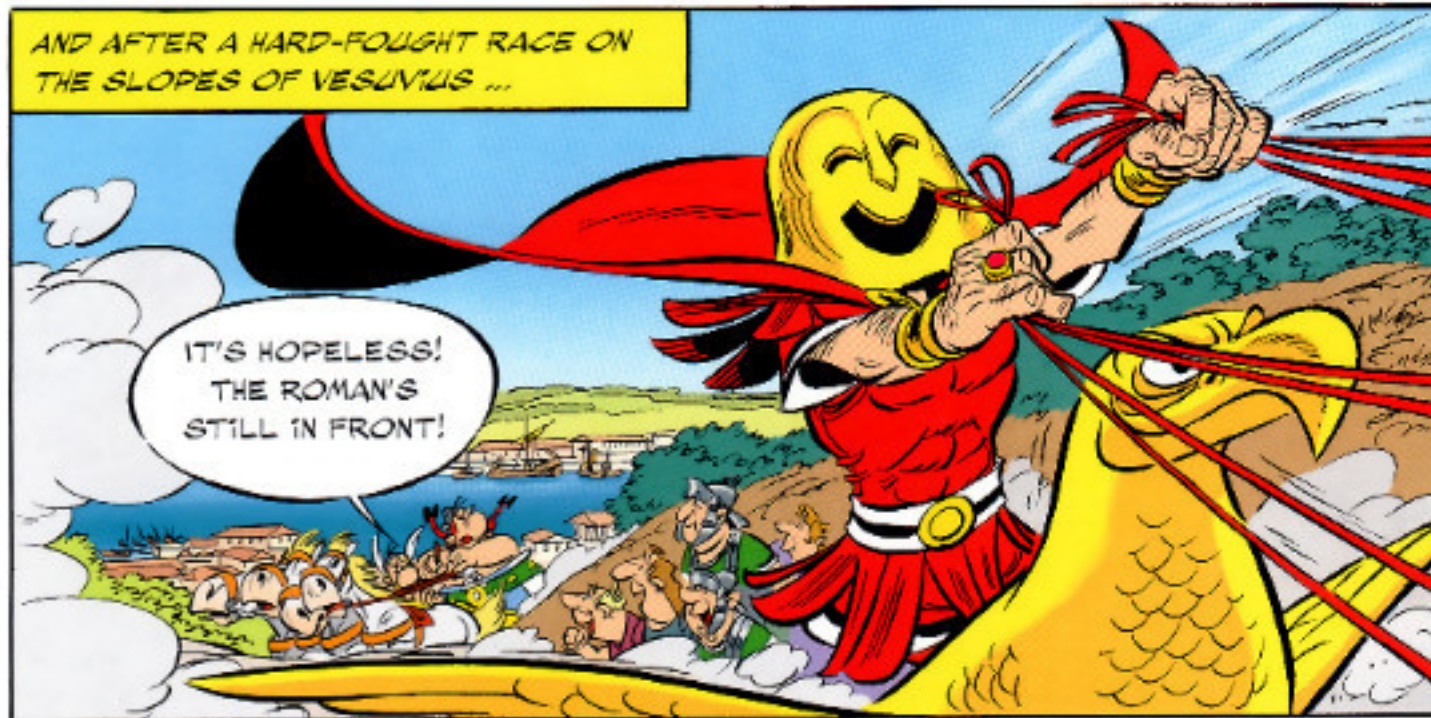
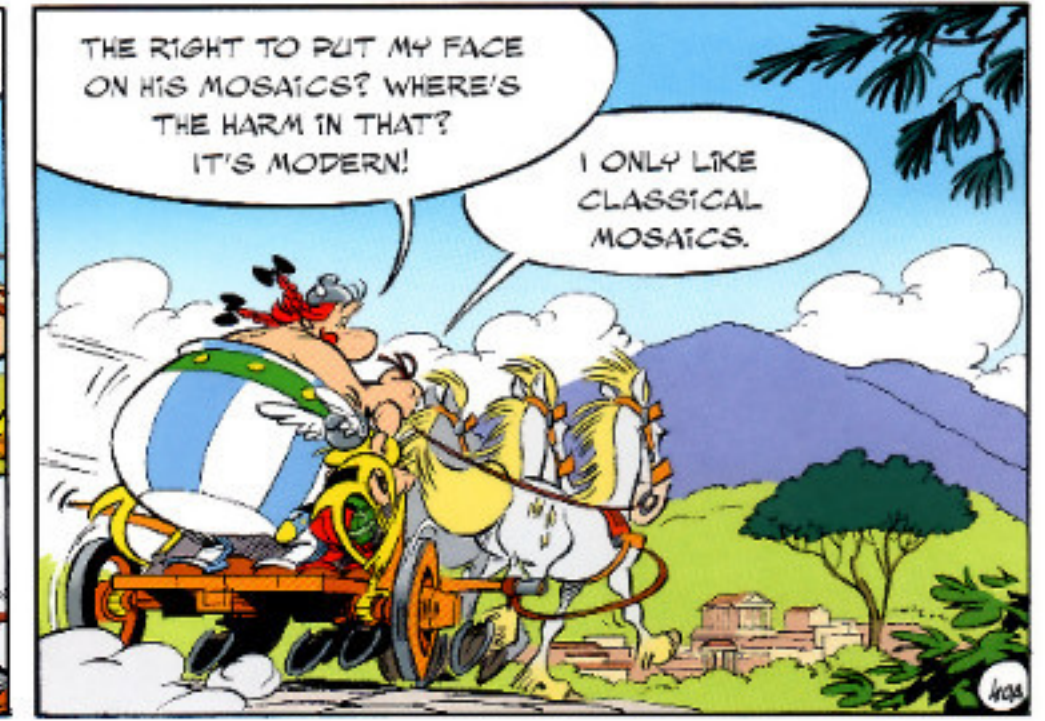
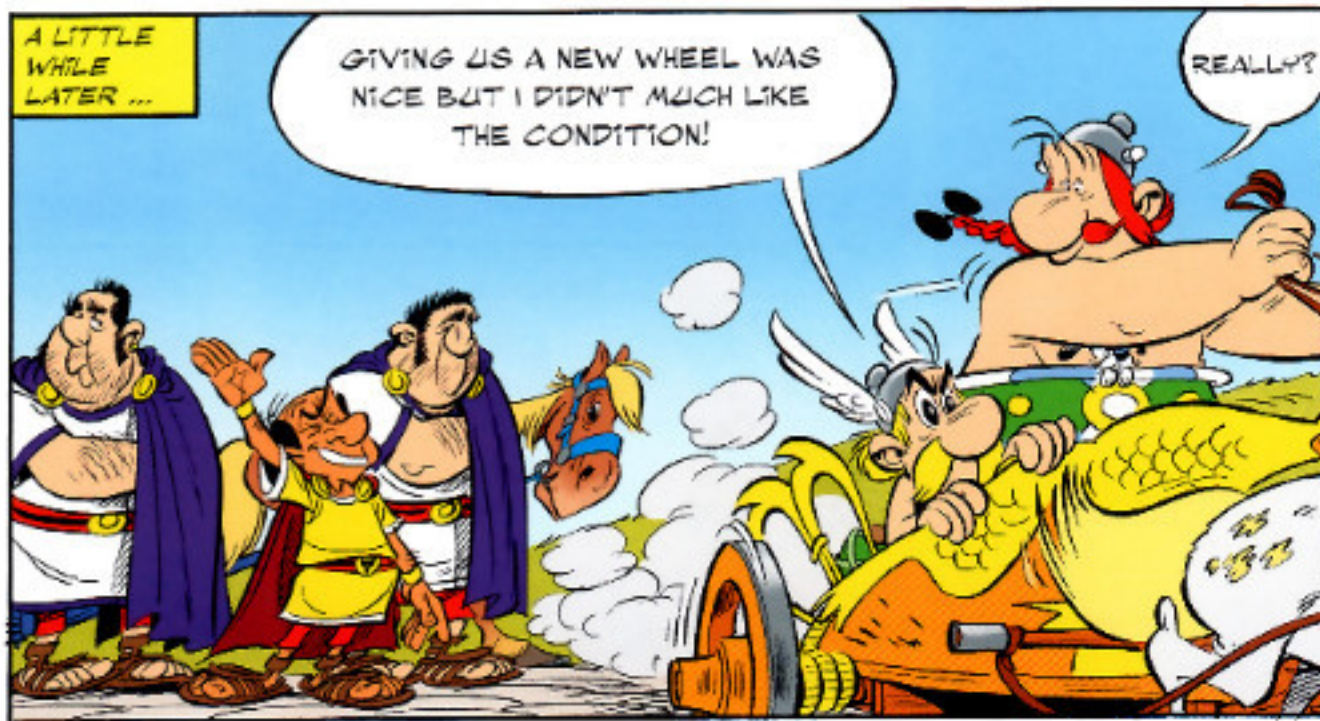
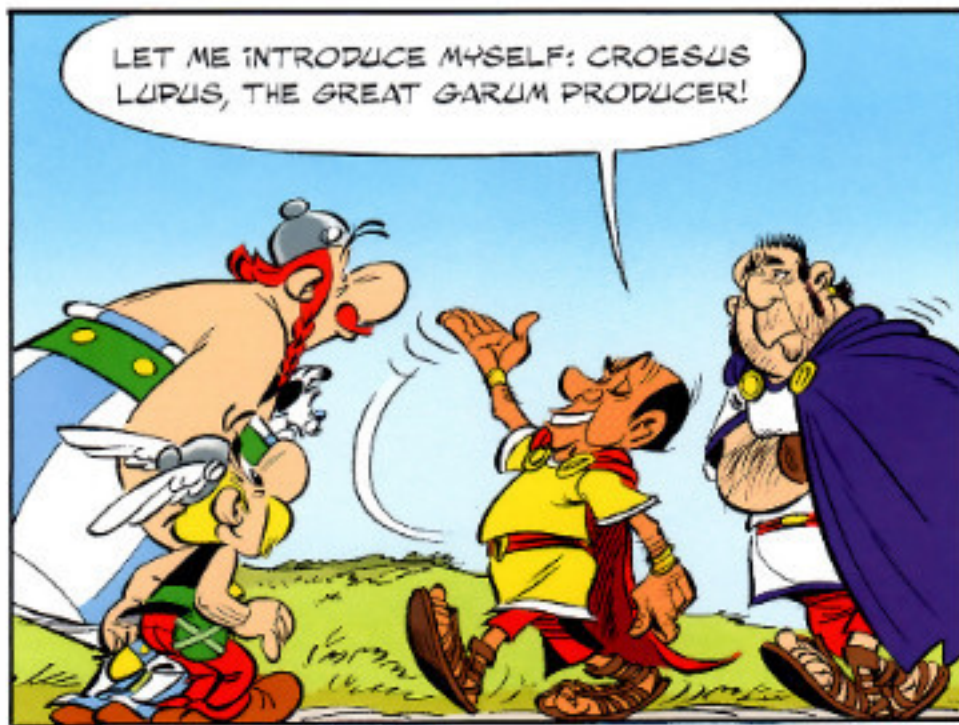




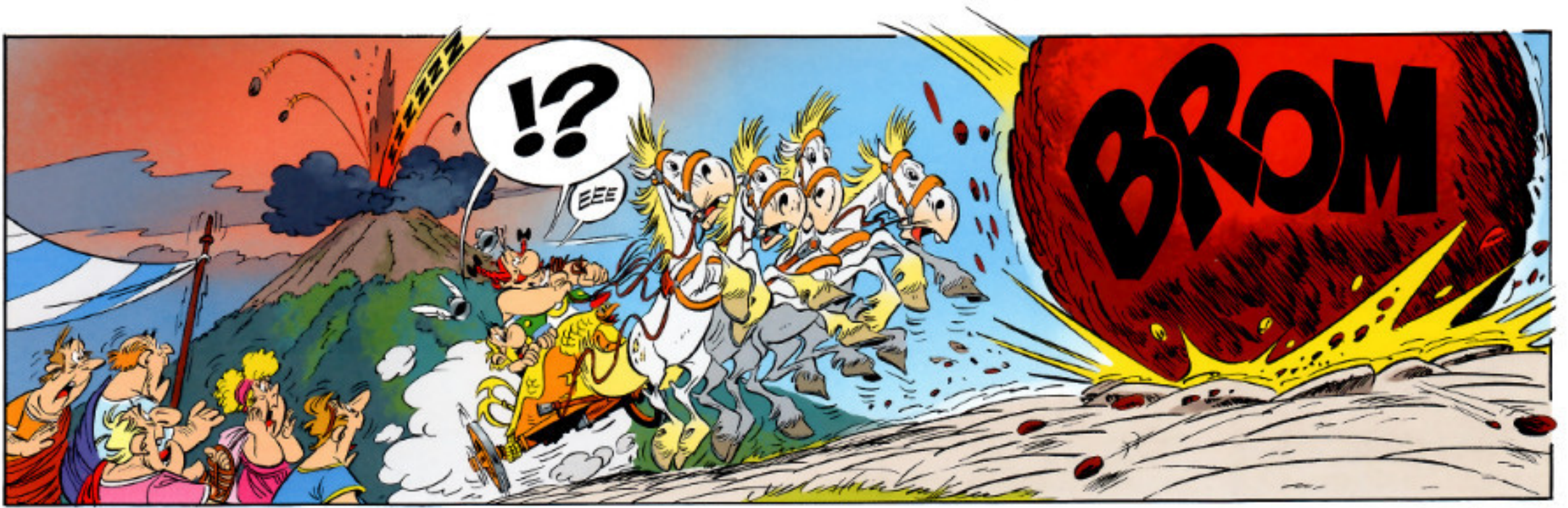




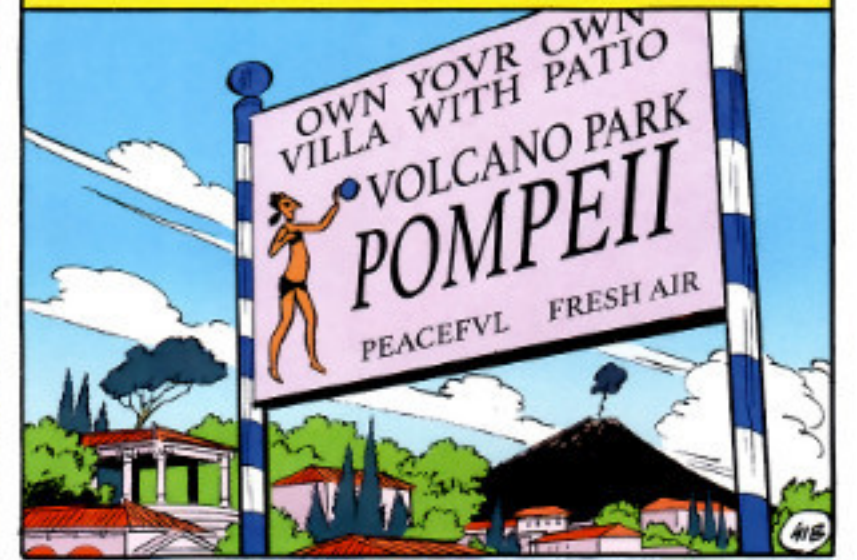




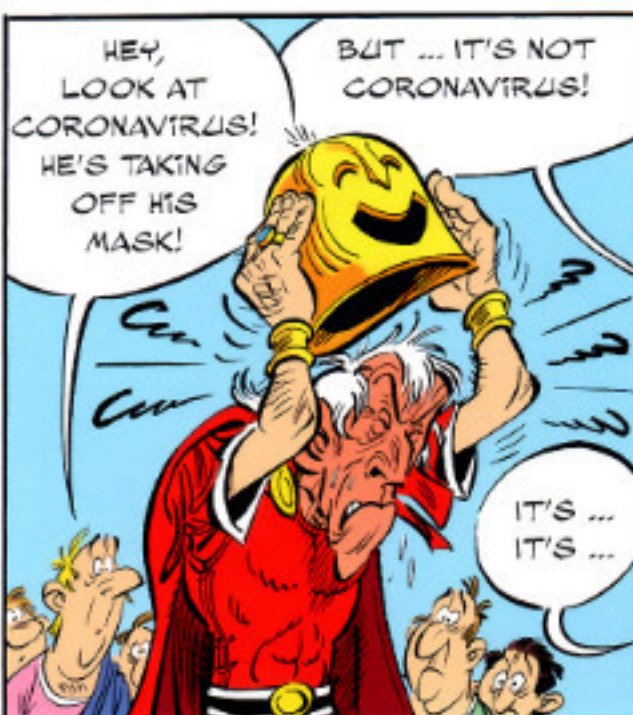
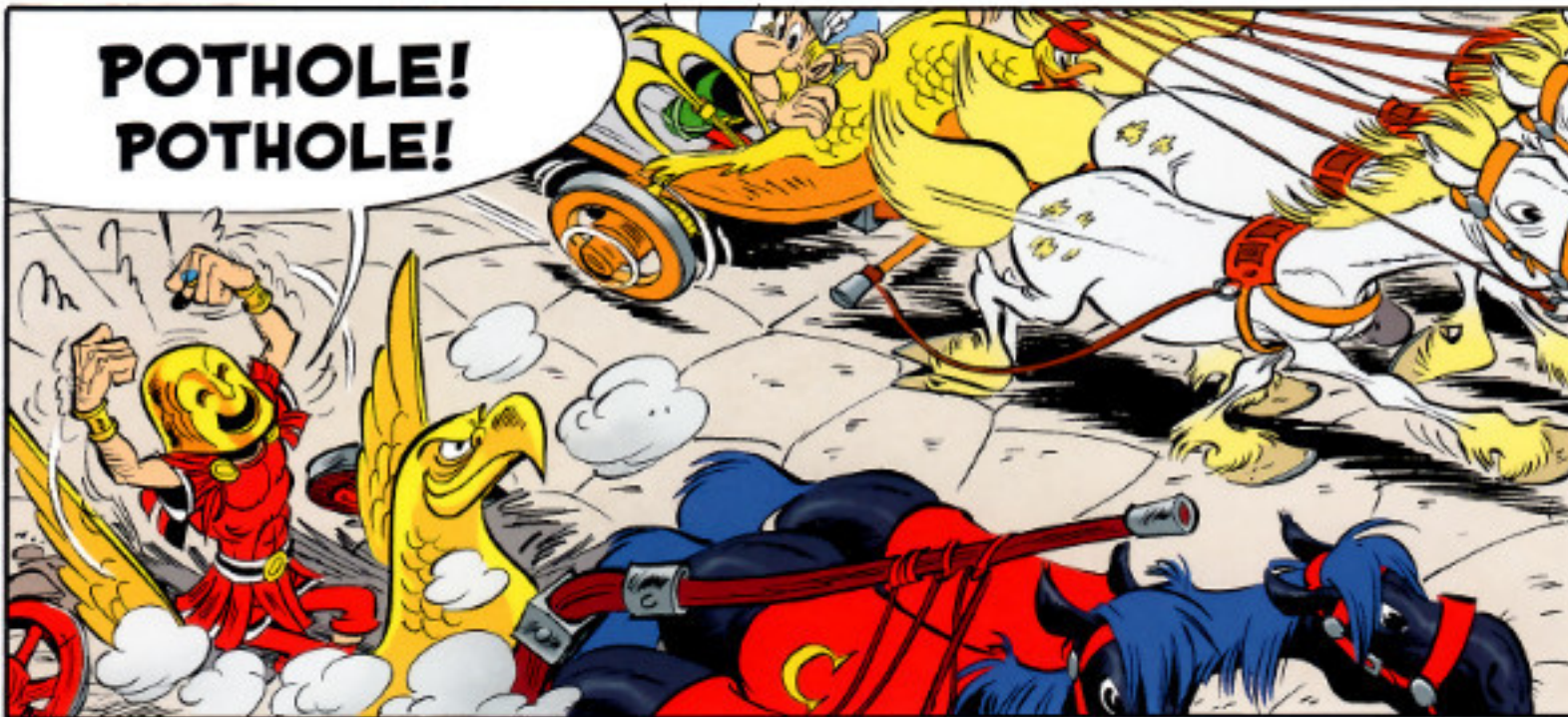
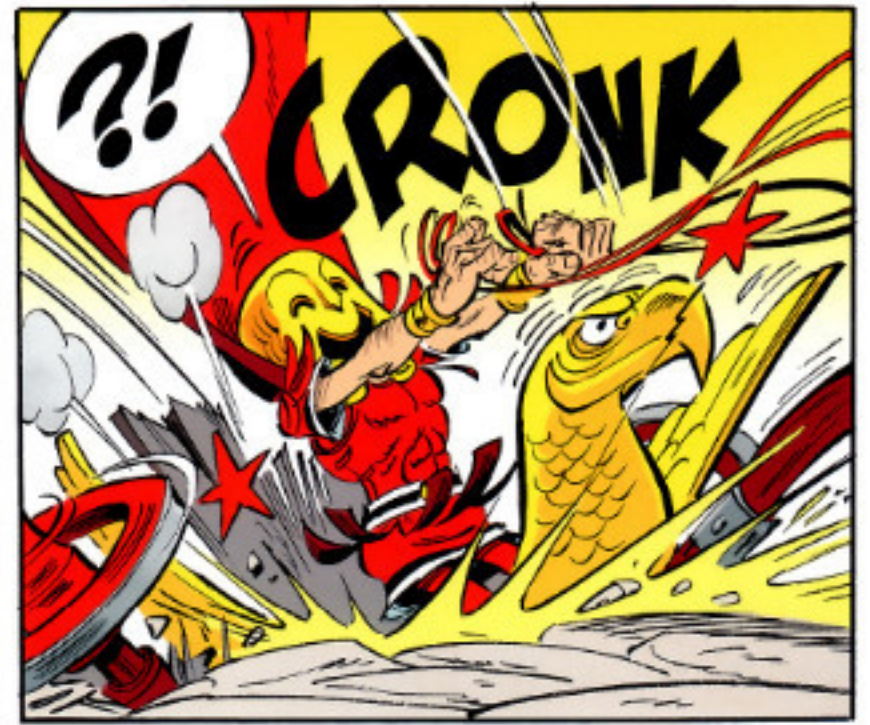
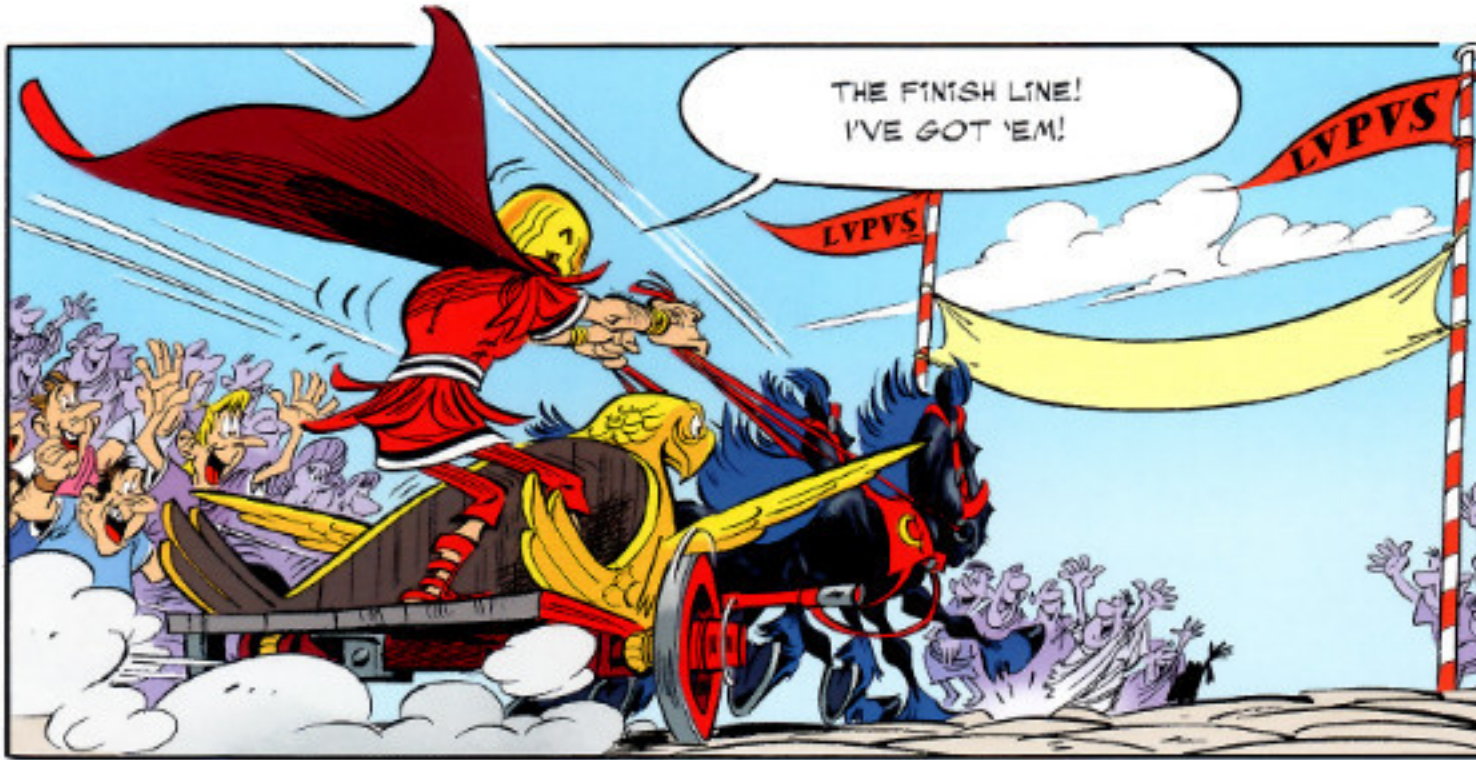




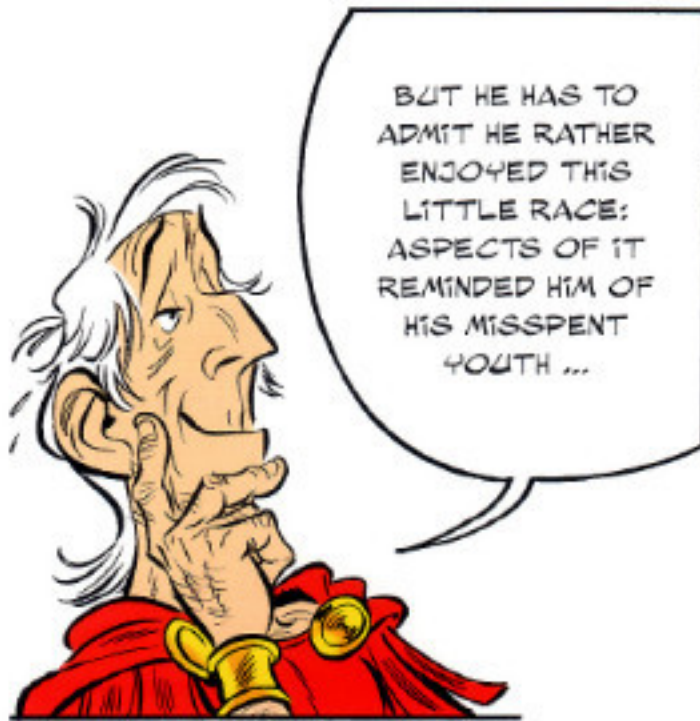
IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT OBELIX'S INTERVENTION AFFORDED THE VESUVIUS REGION A REASONABLY LONG PERIOD OF RESPITE (UNTIL 79 AD).



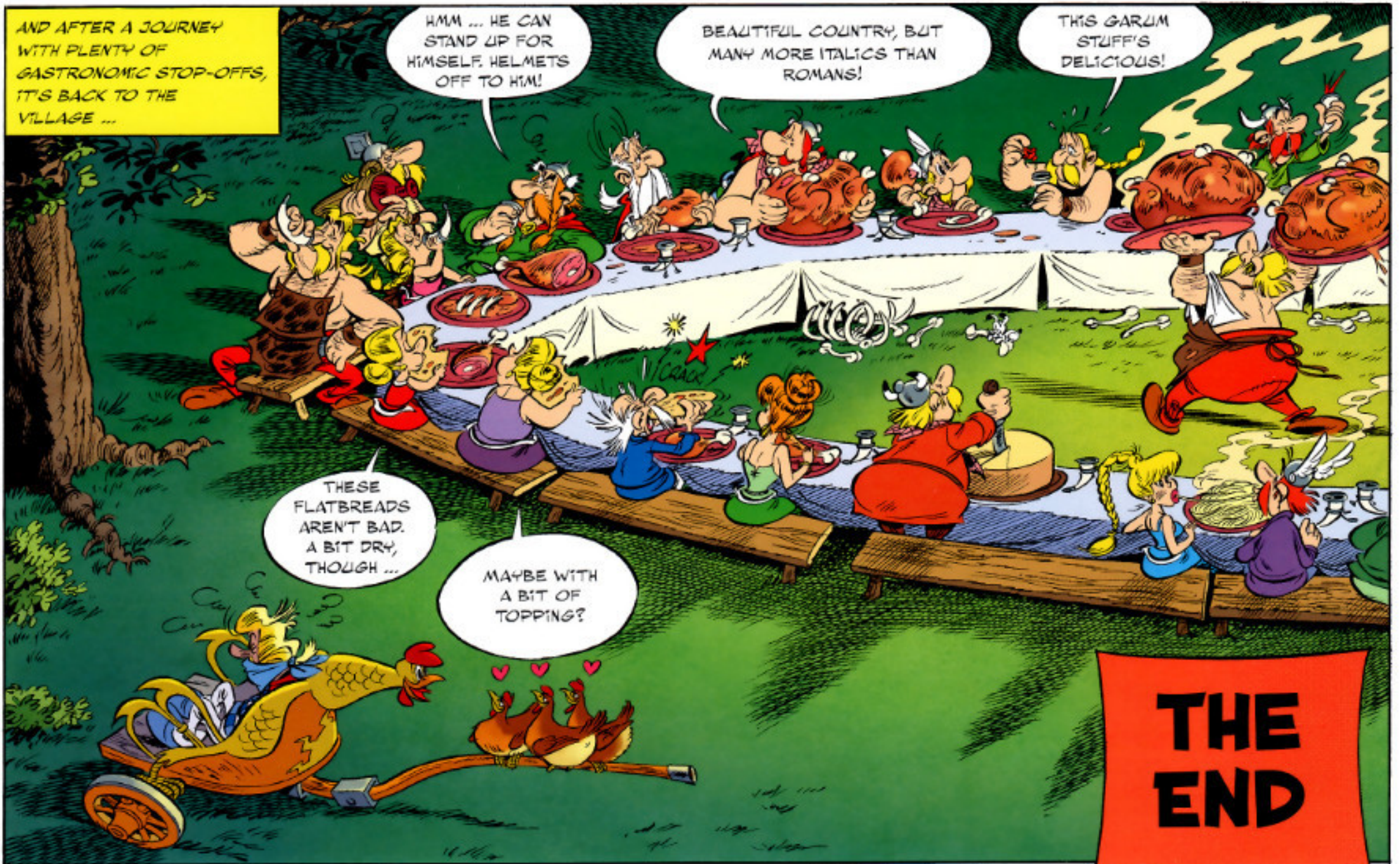
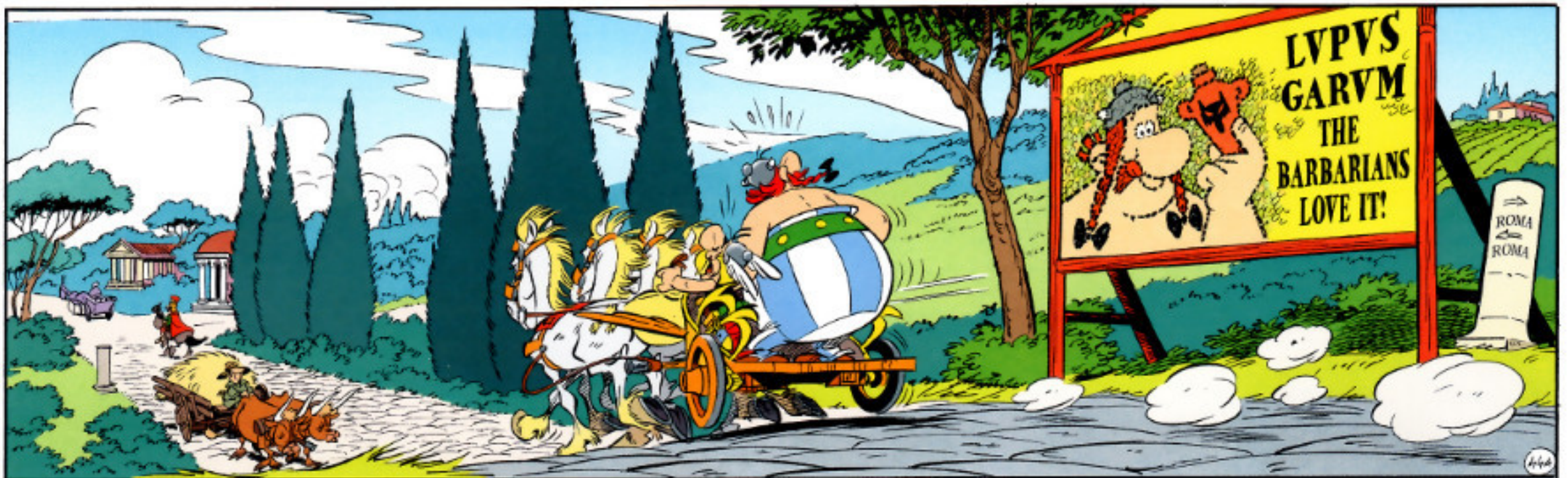
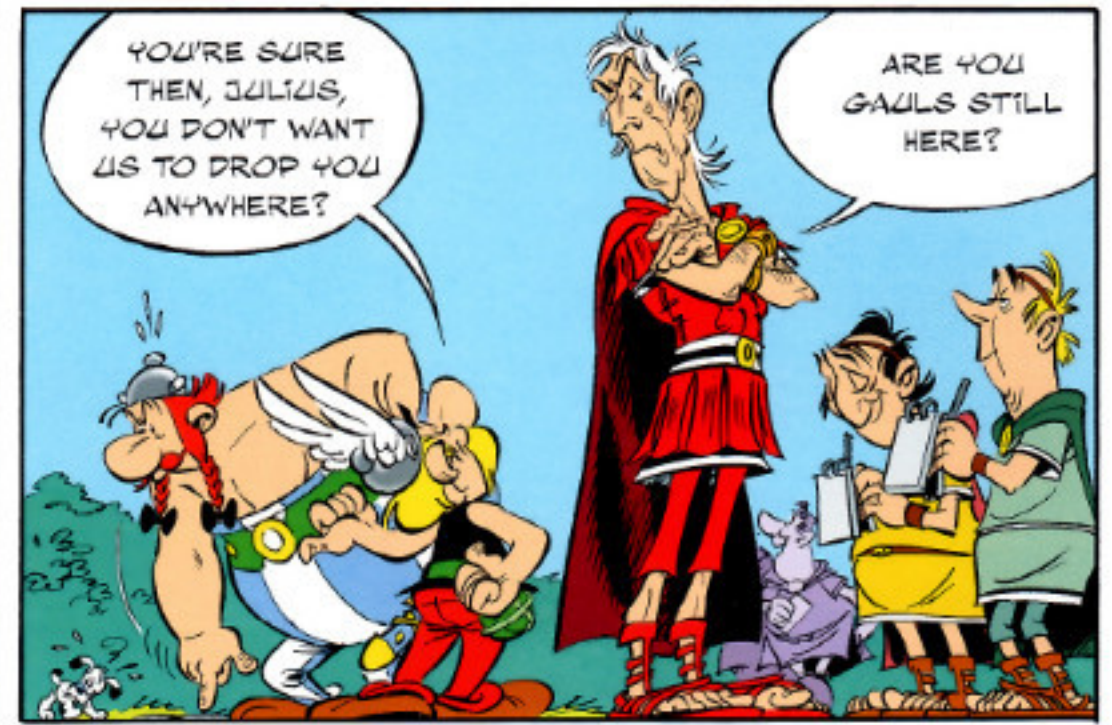












FERRI + CONRAD